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[FATHER AND SON.]

BELLE OF THE SEASON

By W. E. CHADWICK.

CHAPTER III.

Things of the noblest kind his genius drew,
And looked through nature at a single view;
A loose he gave to his unbounded soul,
And taught new lands to rise, new seas to roll;
Cleft into before scenes unknowns before,
And, passing nature's bounds, was something more!

Churchill's *Genius*.

It was the same afternoon we have already described in the preceding chapters.

In a large apartment fronting the Thames, was a young artist, brush in hand, putting the finishing touches to a picture.

The room was one of a suite, and was fitted up in a style which did great credit to the young proprietor's taste as an artist and a gentleman.

The walls were hung with pictures, some of them

from the hands of masters and others the work of their owner. They were all shown to the best advantage.

A long deep window at the front of the apartment afforded a view of the river, but this window was covered with white drapery that fluttered gently in the soft breeze.

A dark bright carpet covered the floor, the furniture was luxurious and costly, and exquisite marble statuettes gleamed here and there in niches or on marble consoles.

The principal object of attraction in this unique studio was its proprietor himself.

He was the beau-ideal of an enthusiastic young artist, and strongly resembled some of the glorious portraits of the immortal Raphael. He had the same oval face, the same dark eyes glowing with the fire of genius, the same exquisite mouth, equally capable of tender smiles or stern compression, and the same delicately-moulded chin. His upper lip was adorned by a heavy gold-hued moustache. He

looked like one whose mind is full of splendid conceptions, and whose soul is at peace with himself and mankind.

His dress was similar in style to that adopted by many artists, but he wore his crimson gown, confined at his waist by a cord of bullion, with a peculiar grace, and his bright cap was set jauntily upon his head, permitting a few fair locks to stray over his wide forehead.

With his palette in one hand and brush in the other he stood before his picture, contemplating it with a rapt expression on his countenance.

The picture itself was a remarkable creation.

The young artist had appropriately named it "The Temple of Eden."

It portrayed an eastern scene. In the foreground was a very wilderness of trailing vines and blossoms, and from its midst arose lofty palms, whose great leaves seemed pendulous. A banyan tree, with dim aisles, into which the sunlight penetrated in little patches through the plentiful foliage, was a prominent object. There were bubbling fountains springing up from the earth, little nooks here and there inviting to repose, and over all an Eden-like air. The time was early evening, and a magnificent sunset gave an additional charm to the scene.

The only figure in the picture was that of a young girl, in the flush of youth and beauty. She was sitting on a mound of flowers, and before her was spread a variety of delicate fruits thickly interspersed with flowers. There was an eager light in her blue eyes, an expectant smile on her bright lips, and her head was inclined a little, as though she were awaiting the arrival of some loved one.

There was a profusion of colour, of course, but it was harmoniously blended, and the eye loved to linger upon the cool shadows of that natural temple and upon the angelic countenance of its lovely priestess, and upon the amber and roseate clouds that glorified the western horizon.

"It is finished!" said the young artist, with a smile and a sigh. "The last touch has been given to my labour of months. What will Lady Rosebury say to it?"

He drew back, folded his arms, and contemplated the picture in every light.

From his words it was apparent that the picture had been painted for Lady Rosebury.

"She will like it!" was his comment, after a close scrutiny. "She encouraged my love of art, she made me what I am, and this picture—my best—belongs of right to her! Would that it were a thousand times more worthy of her acceptance! Would that I could paint the glowing visions, the splendid dreams, that throng upon my soul!"

His face kindled with enthusiasm for a moment, and then a dreamy look came into his eyes, and a tender smile flickered about his mouth.

"This picture for Lady Rosebury—my next for Geraldine!" he murmured. "Ah! that reminds me I must call upon Geraldine this evening, and tell her I have finished the picture at last. She has taken great interest in it. As I slept so little last night, I will give myself up to repose now!"

Setting back the easel that upheld his master-painting, the young artist flung himself wearily upon a couch near at hand, and soon fell asleep.

For some time the only sounds that disturbed the stillness of the chamber were his regular breathing, and the faint hum that came up from the street and the river.

But at length another sound broke upon the quiet scene.

The door of the ante-room clicked once or twice, and a man entered the ante-chamber.

He was apparently some years past middle-age, and his countenance was sinister and forbidding. His light-coloured eyes were surmounted by heavy brows that had been bleached in spots to an iron-grey colour, that matched the bushy locks on his ill-shaped head. His mouth was coarse and wide, and his face was flushed, evidently with recent potations, while his movements had a vagueness about them that arose from the same cause.

The dress of this person conformed with his looks. A pair of green plaid trowsers, rather frayed and worn, and somewhat glossy about the knees, a waistcoat of velveteen, much the worse for wear, and a

short jacket, reaching below his waist, made up a costume the reverse of elegant. He wore a heavy brass ring, with an immense piece of red glass in it, and a chain of the same metal was ostentatiously displayed on his breast.

Altogether, the man looked like one who had spent years in some remote corner of the world, and in manner and dress had forgotten the usages of polite society.

Stumbling into the ante-chamber, he looked curiously about him.

This room was intended for the use of persons waiting upon the young artist when he was engaged or absent, and was fitted up much like a drawing-room, with handsome furniture, books, pictures, &c.

"Possible Wal'er Loraine lives here," bellowed the man, regarding the room in evident astonishment. "Must be. Never heard of but one Wal'er Loraine. Not likely to be more than one. If hadn't seen the plate at door, should thought some lord lived here! Le'm see!"

He made a tour of the apartment, regarding everything with a rheumy gaze, and at length paused at the mantel-piece, clutching the carved marble that composed it, and began an examination of the trinkets and ornaments upon it.

A letter lying in a pretty Sèvres vase soon attracted his attention.

With some difficulty he extracted it and surveyed it, muttering:

"Wal'er Loraine—just as thought. Post mark Rosenbury Heath. Same Wal'er. Know couldn't be two Wal'ers Loraines. Thing's impossible. Who's from?"

Without hesitation he drew the letter from the envelope, which had been already opened, and began reading its contents.

"Bloody and honoured son!" he read. "Why, that's from old woman. Understan' b'loved, but why honoured? Seems old creature's well. Letter 'll keep. Finish it any time!"

Acting upon this idea, he put the letter in his pocket and made his way to the door that led into the studio.

It was locked. He turned the knob several times, pushed against the door, and finally stooped and applied his visual organs to the keyhole.

"Key's there!" he muttered. "Wish had something to turn it. Piece wire'd do. Wal'er must be in there. Heart yearns see him. Wal'er! Wal'er!"

No one replied to his faint call, nor to the low irregular knock he bestowed upon the door.

"Fainted, pray," he said, turning towards the window. "Mus' see! Ah! have it!"

He had espied the light iron balcony that ran along the front of the building.

Opening the long French windows he stepped out upon this balcony, and proceeded with great and unnecessary caution to the window of the studio.

Here he pushed against the windows which were already ajar with such force that he stumbled headlong into the chamber.

"Dear me!" he muttered, rubbing one of his knees which had come in collision with an easy-chair. "Brained 'self, course. Alays do. Where's Wal'er? If fainted, mus' wake him up!"

But he had not awakened the young artist.

He lay upon his couch sleeping as peacefully as a weary child.

The stranger did not notice him, however, probably expecting to see him in an upright position.

"Wal'er ain't here!" he soliloquized. "Pretty room, though. Some pictures nice, specially that with all that bright paint on. Like red and blue pictures. If pay for picture, like good deal paint, brightest kind. What's this?"

He paused before the easel, regarding the artist's latest work.

"Pretty thing!" he commented. "Ain't 'ough red and blue, though. Ought have girls in red dresses dancing and a fiddler with blue coat on. Only one girl! If she wasn't covered with flowers, should think hadn't much clothes on. Must been poor. Don't like picture. Never'll sell in world!"

After this decision he proceeded to make a minute investigation of the apartment, in the course of which he came to the lounge upon which the artist was lying.

"Who's here?" he ejaculated, pausing before it and regarding the slender figure. "Mus' be Wal'er. Fainted, sure 'ough. Feel pulse?"

He cautiously laid a finger upon the delicate wrist of the young artist, and gravely said:

"One, two, three, four! Yea, it's all right. Little fast, pray. Sleep, not fainted! Looks like Queen Sheba in that coat many colours and that cap. Good looking. Not much like me, though!"

He cast a complacent glance at his reflection in an opposite mirror, although his trembling limbs caused it to waver before his uncertain vision, and then he turned his attention to the sleeper.

"Looks comf'ble. Hands white. Don't work. Thought artis' always poor. P'raps Wal'er's exception. Else where nice furniture come from? Wonder if has money. Ah! there's purse. Le'm see!"

He went to a little table on which was lying a pocket-book, and seating himself proceeded to examine the article.

"Nice thing. Just quit me!" he said, opening it, and glancing over the tablets, on which were some memoranda written in a clear manly hand. "Wal'er writes like scholar. Hope purse not like scholar's! Le'm see!"

He emptied upon the table the contents of the pocket-book, and then looked at the little heap of gold and silver with childish delight.

"Nice, ain't it?" he mused. "Wal'er's rich. Mus' be—all this. Mus' borrow. Haven't penn' my own. All right if take it. Wouldn't mind if artis' myself, if pays so well. Wal'er's young. Earn more. Mus' learn be benevolent. Now's time learn!"

He put the pocket-book somewhere about his person, and proceeded to drum his fingers upon the table with an air of great contentment.

Suddenly he started, a shadow passed over his countenance, and he exclaimed:

"Per'aps money's not good. May be keeps it deceive landlady with. P'raps chinks it when she's about, so she won't send in bill. Heard such things. Mus' see. Mus' be cheated!"

With something of an injured air and look, he drew out the pocket-book, and proceeded to ring the coins upon the table.

"All right," he said, in tones of relief. "Money's good. Mus' be's much twenty pound. Live like lord."

Replacing the purse in his pocket, he began examining the articles upon the table.

A pretty stationary cabinet, inlaid with costly cameos, and formed of a precious wood, came in for its share of examination, and he soon discovered in its recesses a packet of papers, neatly tied with a ribbon.

"More letters, eh?" he soliloquized, untying the packet. "Who's from? Le'm see. Ah! bill for chambers. Received payment. Glad of it. Seems furniture's own. Good thing. Never'll sell pictures. Wouldn't give shillin' for lot. Don't un'stand first principles art. Too much 'raid of best paints. Subject don't 'peal to senses. Can live on proceeds furniture some time, though. Why, here's letter from Lady Rosenbury!"

He glanced over a delicate missive with her ladyship's name appended, and continued:

"Possible? What ladyship's want Wal'er? Begins my dear young friend! What's she mean? Mus' be something wrong. Why dear? Looks 'spicious. Mus' 'quire into matter. And here's more letters from ladyship. Writes like mother. 'Spec' Wal'er didn't mean leave letters here. Looks like 'em."

He looked over the remainder of the letters, thrust them back into their recess, and then arose and approached the young artist, regarding him with a benevolent expression.

"How comf'ble looks! Hot afternoon," he mused. "Envy his sleep. Why not sleep self? Take nap, wake up, and talk Wal'er! That's thing! Do it. Won't lie down in sight. Scare him death. Surprise him!"

The idea meant to be conveyed by this disjointed speech was soon carried into effect.

He moved cautiously about, drew up a silken lounge in the farthest corner of the chamber, piled a few cushions upon it to serve as pillows, and then crept into the little recess he had made and composed himself to sleep.

The drawry hum from the street, added to the effects of the liquor he had imbibed before visiting the young artist, soon had the result of sending him into a sound slumber.

For a little while silence again reigned in the room.

And then the artist stirred uneasily in his sleep, stretched his arms, rubbed his eyes, and regained his full consciousness.

"How long I have slept!" he said, turning his eyes to the pretty gilt clock on the mantel-piece. "I must have been very tired. For two nights I have been awake, feeling an inspiration about my picture, and desiring to finish it as soon as possible, but my very sound sleep has quite refreshed me. I feel myself again."

He arose from his couch, and commenced walking back and forth in his studio.

CHAPTER IV.

Contentment gives a crown
Where fortune hath deny'd it.

Thomas Ford.

The young artist had crossed his floor but a few times ere he became conscious of a loud snoring in the

room. He paused in his walk, and looked around him in surprise.

"What can that be?" he mused. "Some one must be asleep near me."

His first impulse was to go to the door leading to the ante-room, but it was locked as he had left it. He unlocked it however, glanced into the outer chamber, noticed that it was empty, and returned to his studio.

"It is only in here that I hear that sound," he thought. "Some one must be concealed in this or the adjoining room."

A look into a pretty dressing-room adjoining convinced him that it was untenanted, and he began an examination of the studio.

Guided by the sound, he went to the distant corner where the stranger had ensconced himself, drew out the lounge, and beheld his singular visitor.

That personage lay at his ease, with his head thrown back on the cushion-pillow, his hat resting on his brow, his flaming red necktie unfastened, and a gentle perspiration bedewing his flushed countenance.

As the artist looked at this strange spectacle, an amused smile gathered about his mouth.

"This is certainly a very cool proceeding," he said aloud. "What can the fellow want here? How did he get in?"

The gentle fluttering of the curtains called his attention to the window and balcony, and he instantly comprehended the manner in which an entrance had been effected.

"I must be more careful in future," he thought, especially when I send my valet away on business. I might be robbed of all my valuables without being aware of my loss until they were gone beyond redemption."

After a few minutes further contemplation of the strange man before him, the artist gently touched him with his foot, saying:

"Get up, sir!"

A still louder snoring was the only reply his words elicited.

"Well, really, this grows more serious," said the artist, with a laugh. "What if some of my fashionable patrons were to call upon me at this moment! What if some lady were to enter? I must get the fellow out without delay!"

He touched him again with his foot, this time not so gently as before, and called:

"Come, come, sir! You must get up—"

"Le'm see!" muttered the fellow, sleepily, turning over.

"That is decidedly cool," said the artist. "Come, if you don't get up, I must have you put out!"

"Breakfast ready?" asked the fellow, rubbing his eyes. "No need make such noise. Aina' deaf. What want?"

By dint of his exertions, the stranger managed to awaken to a full consciousness, and he then sat up and stared at the artist with evident surprise.

His sleep had apparently greatly sobered him.

After a moment's contemplation of the amused countenance of the artist, he struggled to an upright position, gathered up his pillows with clumsiness, placed them on the couch, and then fully emerged from his concealment.

"Ah, sir! Beg pardon for momentary forgetfulness," he said, with an awkward bow, as he removed his hat. "Are you Walter Loraine?"

"I am," replied the artist.

"Walter Loraine, of Rosenbury Heath?"

The artist replied in the affirmative.

"Possible!" cried the stranger. "Shouldn't have known you. Saw your plate at the door just now, and thought you might be the Loraine of Rosenbury Heath. As boy, you had remarkable fancy for pictures."

Walter regarded his visitor in surprise, and said, coldly:

"Indeed! Well, what can I do for you?"

"That's not very warm greeting," said the man, with a coarse laugh. "Tisn't what one would expect after being gone from England ten years. Don't you know me, Walter? I am Colite Loraine—your father!"

An observer would have found it hard to believe that statement—the two men being so totally dissimilar.

Indeed, a stronger contrast than they presented could hardly be imagined.

"My father!" exclaimed the astonished artist. "Is it possible!"

"Quite!" responded the man, with a chuckle. "I have just returned from Australia. Poor as a crow. Gained a little money out there, but lost it soon. Thought myself lucky to get enough together to pay my fare home. Don't you know me yet, Walter?"

As he concluded, he extended his brawny hand.

The young artist clasped it for a moment, and then said, as he relinquished it:

"Yes, I know you now. My surprise at first prevented a recognition. We believed you dead. Nine years ago, or thereabouts, my mother received a letter from Australia, written by a friend of yours, stating that you had died—"

"Ah, yes," said the visitor, throwing himself full length upon a couch. "Good joke, that! He, he! So you all believed it, eh? I got a friend to write that letter, just to deceive you all. Pretty neatly done, wasn't it?"

"I can't agree with you," said Walter, coldly.

"Can't, eh? Did old woman marry again?"

"No. She believes herself a widow, and prefers to remain so."

"Widow, eh? He, he! Pretty good!"

"What could have been your object in sending home such a letter?" asked Walter.

"Well, truth was, Walter, found new ties out there. I got me a new wife with little money, and thought might as well get rid of the old woman. Give her chance, you know. Wasn't fair to keep her tied up and be free, self, course."

Walter looked astonished and disgusted at this revelation.

"My second wife died three years ago," continued Loraine, marking the emotions with which Walter had received his communication. "Left me her little property, course. Went into little business. Lost it all. Lived from hand to mouth. Finally, heard Lord Rosenbury was dead, and determined to hasten home as quickly as possible. Borrowed money of all my acquaintances, worked little, and so on, and here am!"

"But what had Lord Rosenbury's death to do with your return?" asked Walter.

Lorraine started and looked uneasily at the artist, replying:

"Oh, nothing. Slip of the tongue, that's all. He is really dead, isn't he?"

"Yes, he is dead!" said Walter, with a deep sigh, as he sank into a chair.

"And his—his son Raymond has succeeded him of course?"

"Of course."

"So Raymond is Lord Rosenbury now?" mused Loraine, still keeping his gaze fixed upon Walter. "He is the owner of the grand ancestral estates? The long rent-rolls of the Rosenburys belong to him? Ah, well, he must have a happy life of it! He's a lucky fellow! Are you friendly with him, Walter?"

"Not particularly," replied the young artist, frankly. "We are not congenial—"

"Not congenial, eh! Dear me! Do you expect to be intimate with his lordship—"

"Not at all. I do not like him and he does me the honour to reciprocate the sentiment I feel towards him."

"Oh, indeed!" said Loraine, sarcastically. "By the way, Walter, you talk like a person. Where did you pick up so much education?"

Walter briefly explained that the late Lord Rosenbury had made him his *protégé*, and had given him a first-class education at the first institutions of the country.

"Possible?" exclaimed Loraine. "His lordship was very benevolent, as I remember. And what else did he do for you?"

Walter hesitated about answering his interlocutor, but after a moment's thought he replied:

"He sent me abroad to travel—to Rome to study. I was in Rome when the tidings reached me of his death, so I hastened home again."

"So you are a regularly-educated painter! I thought artists were always poor, yet you live like a lord. Do you get well paid for your pictures?"

"Very well," replied Walter, carelessly. "But I am not obliged to paint pictures for a living."

"Not obliged to paint? How then do you live in this style?"

"Lord Rosenbury completed his benefactions to me by leaving me a small fortune," said the artist, with some emotion. "He foresaw that painting for a living would be a long struggle, and kindly placed me above all want and all care. I have money enough to do as I like—travel, or remain at home."

"And how did Raymond like your having this fortune left to you?" inquired Loraine.

"I neither know nor care."

Lorraine looked at the young artist in astonishment, but that emotion passed as he marked the earnest, haughty face, and his careless smile.

"Do you never wish, Walter?" he asked, suddenly, "that you were Raymond Lord Rosenbury? Wouldn't you like to exchange places with him?"

"No. I would rather be Walter Loraine than Raymond Lord Rosenbury!"

"You are content, then, in your sphere of life?"

"I am content!"

"But, Walter," persisted Loraine, "do you pretend that you like your obscure life so well that you would not exchange it for a title and unbounded wealth?"

Do you never look above your station for a wife? Or are you already married?"

A shadow flitted over the artist's face, as he responded:

"I am not married. Of course I should not despise a title and wealth. They would afford me great means of doing good, of making others happy. They would even, perhaps, add to my own happiness. But would repining give me either? Would it not embitter the blessings I have? My lot is not obscure. I have friends and acquaintances among the noble and great, and I aspire to fame. I would be foolish to reject what I have because I can't have more."

"You are quite a philosopher," remarked Loraine. "I was inclined to think Lord Rosenbury was wrong in educating you above your station—"

"Pardon me," said Walter, "but you mean your station, not mine. I am just making mine. You see I don't consider because one man is a gardener that his posterity to the latest generation must be gardeners also. Every man makes his own station by his own character—his own intellect."

"Well, well, have your own ideas, Walter. I suppose it is natural for you to be aspiring and all that. I came back, however, expecting to find you ignorant, and contented with a labourer's life. How is your mother?"

"Quite well, I believe. She was well when I heard from her last, a week or two ago."

"Does she live at the old cottage?"

"Yes. I suppose you will go to-day to see her?"

"Oh, there's no hurry," said Loraine. "Time enough for her reproaches! Has she any money?"

"I don't know. She has enough to support herself comfortably. Lady Rosenbury offered her an annuity some time ago, and she refused to accept it!"

"She refused it? Ah, I understand. But if I had been here she would have accepted it, scruples or no scruples. Does the present lord do anything for her now?"

Walter replied in the negative.

Lorraine grew thoughtful and remained silent for a few minutes.

The artist occupied the time by scrutinizing the face of his visitor, but there was no affection in the glances he bestowed upon him. He seemed to feel simply indifferent to him.

"The old woman, that is, your mother, thinks a great deal of you, I believe," said Loraine, at length breaking the silence.

"I believe so. She seems to have a strange kind of tenderness for me which I cannot understand. I suppose it is a mother's love."

"And you love her equally?"

"Why, not so much, of course," replied Walter, hesitatingly, as if he were analyzing his own feelings. "I suppose filial love isn't as strong as maternal love. I esteem her highly, I am grateful for her affection and the indulgence with which she always treated me. She has rejoiced in my education in Lord Rosenbury's friendship for me, in my advantages and present position; but my highest thoughts, my noblest aspirations, I have been obliged to confine to my own breast, as far as she is concerned."

Did Lady Rosenbury share her husband's good opinion of you?"

"She has been equally kind to me."

"Ah!" said Loraine, his face darkening. "You'd better keep your own sphere, Walter. Let her ladyship alone. She's no equal for a simple gardener's son."

"But I am not the gardener's son—I am an artist!" said Walter, smiling. "I stand on my own responsibility, be pleased to remember."

Lorraine's face flushed, and he looked anxious and ill at ease.

"Well, well, we won't quarrel," he said, in tones meant to be soothing. "Love whoever you like, Walter. Makes no difference to poor old father. Glad you've got on so well in world. Got a nice little den here and can afford to be generous to your father. Couldn't you spare me a trifle?"

"Certainly," said Walter, going to the table and searching in vain for his pocket-book—the one Loraine had already in his possession.

"Why, that's very singular," said the artist, searching among the papers and in his stationery cabinet. I am very sure I threw it down here when I came home?"

"Oh, never mind your pocket-book!" exclaimed Loraine, with suspicious eagerness. "Can't you give me a hundred pounds? Be a long time before trouble you again, Walter!"

The artist gave a quick, keen glance at Loraine's face, saw it flush still more deeply under his scrutiny, and then, satisfied of the whereabouts of his pocket-book, he went to the desk in one corner of the room, and filled out a cheque for the amount desired. He then handed it to Loraine.

That personage had advanced towards the desk, seen the document filled out, and now beheld Walter

put in his pocket a purse much better filled than the one he had abstracted.

"As you are not going to Rosenbury Heath immediately," said Walter, "I will write to mother this evening, informing her that you are alive and have returned. You purpose remaining in London?"

Lorraine replied in the affirmative.

"I have been very busy for a week or two," said Walter, "with one of my pictures, and owe her a letter. As I said, I will write her to-night."

"All right, Walter. Shan't see you again very soon, so good-bye!"

He shook hands with the young artist, put his cheque in his pocket, and took his departure with a jubilant air.

"If Parkin had been here, he would not have been allowed to enter," thought Walter, with a smile, after his visitor's departure. "What a father to respect and love!" he added, more bitterly. "What would Geraldine say to such a relative?"

Going to his picture, Walter resumed his contemplation of it, but Loraine's visit had made an unpleasant impression upon him, and he did not feel quite himself.

It was not pleasant to have such vulgar, drunken father, and Walter felt annoyed and disturbed.

"I suppose he will run through his hundred and twenty pounds," thought Walter, "and will then go home and rob mother of her savings. I must warn her of his probable intentions. Of course, she will have a home with me always, if she is obliged to render up to him all she has. He can never rob her of a home and support while I live! I will write to her now!"

He seated himself at his desk and proceeded to write to Mrs. Loraine.

His letter was unusually affectionate, for he reproached himself for the feeling he had confessed to Loraine, and he communicated the fact of Loraine's return with the utmost caution and tenderness.

While still busy at his task, a rap sounded at the door, and Parkin, Walter's valet, entered the chamber.

He advanced and stood respectfully at a little distance from his master until Walter was ready to attend to him.

The valet was somewhat of a dandy, but his face showed him to be an honest and faithful man, and his glances at the young artist were full of a respectful affection.

"Well, Parkin, what is it?" asked Walter, finishing the sentence he had begun. "You did your errand correctly?"

"Yes, sir, and here's a telegram, sir, as has just come for you, sir," replied Parkin. "I hope it's no bad news, sir."

Walter took the telegram, scanned its meaning, and sank back in his chair deathly pale.

"My mother is very ill, Parkin," he said. "I must go home immediately. I have just time to catch the train."

Flinging off the sudden languor the news had given him, Walter sent his servant for a cab, while he speedily changed his garments.

In a few moments he was speeding towards the station, where he arrived just in time to take the train, and he was soon on his way home.

(To be continued.)

THE historic mansion in George Street, Hanover Square, London, formerly occupied by Copley, the painter, and for more than three-quarters of a century the dwelling of his son, the late Lord Lyndhurst, is doomed to destruction. The mansion was purchased for £16,000, and a club-house is to be built on the site.

SOVEREIGN DINING AND SIPPING IN PUBLIC.—The custom was observed at an early period, for we find that King Edward II., and his queen, Isabella of France, kept their court at Westminster during the Whitsuntide festival of 1317; and on one occasion, as they were dining in public in the great banqueting-hall, a woman in a mask entered on horse-back, and riding up to the royal table, delivered a letter to King Edward, who imagining that it contained some pleasant conceit or elegant compliment, ordered it to be opened and read aloud for the amusement of his courtiers; but, to his great mortification, it was a cutting satire on his unkingly propensities, setting forth in no measured terms all the calamities which his misgovernment had brought upon England. The woman was immediately taken into custody, and confessed that she had been employed by a certain knight. The knight boldly acknowledged what he had done, and said, "that, supposing the king would read the letter in private, he took that method of apprising him of the complaints of his subjects. The papers of the period of George II. say: 'There was such a resort to Hampton Court on Sunday, July 14, 1728, to see their majesties dine, that the rail surrounding the table broke, and causing some to fall,

made a terrible scramble for hats, &c., at which their majesty's laughed heartily." And, "On Thursday, the 25th of the same month, it is stated, the concourse to see their majesties dine in public at Hampton Court was exceedingly great. A gang of robbers (the swell mob of that day) had mixed themselves amongst the nobility and gentry; several gold watches being lost, besides the ladies' gown tails and lace lappets cut out of number." And again: "On Sunday, 16th of September, 1728, their majesties dined together in public at Windsor (as they will continue to do every Sunday and Thursday during their stay there), when all the country people, whether in or out of mourning, were permitted to see them." Besides these three occasions of George II. and Queen Caroline dining in public, we have another recorded, attended with some peculiar circumstances, as mentioned in the *London Gazette*, No. 7,628, of Tuesday, August 2, 1787: "The 21st ult. being Sunday, their majesties, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the Princess Amelia and Caroline, went to chapel at Hampton Court, and heard a sermon preached by the Rev. Dr. Blomer. Their majesties, and the rest of the royal family dined afterwards in public as usual before a great number of spectators."

CONFIDENCE IN FRIENDSHIP.

Go in the fullness of heavenly trust,
Look in each other's eyes, join hand to hand;
In hallowed friendship journey on through life.

CONFIDENCE in friendship is one of the sweetest pleasures in life. The human heart stands in need of some kind and faithful companion of its cares, in whom it may repose all its weaknesses, and with whom it is sure of finding the tenderest sympathy. Far be it from me to shut up the heart with cold distrust and rigid caution, or to adopt the odious maxim, that "we should live with a friend as if he were one day to become an enemy."

But we must not wholly abandon prudence in any sort of connection, since when every guard is laid aside, our unbounded openness may injure others as well as ourselves. Secrets entrusted to us should be kept most sacred, even from those most near and dear to us, for I hold we have no right to dispose of anything entrusted to our especial keeping.

If there is danger in making an improper choice or selection of friends, how much more fatal would it be to mistake in a stronger kind of attachment—in that which leads to an irrevocable engagement for life; yet so much more is the understanding blinded when once the fancy is captivated, that it seems a desperate undertaking to convince young people in love that they are mistaken in the character of those they prefer.

If the passions would wait for the decision of judgment, and if a young lady could have the same opportunity of examining into the real character of her lover as into that of a female candidate for her friendship, the same rules might direct her in the choice of both, for marriage being the highest state of friendship, the qualities requisite in a friend are still more important in a husband.

But young females know so little of the world, especially of the opposite sex, that they are, in a very extensive sense, unqualified to choose for themselves upon their own judgment.

Whatever romantic notions may be heard or read of, I will vouch for it, those matches are the happiest which are made on rational grounds—on mutual esteem, and the prospect of a real and permanent friendship.

J. A.

BELLS.—At Hereford Cathedral, Messrs. White and Son, with a staff of labourers, have been engaged in the arduous task of taking down the bells, a work rendered more difficult from the height of the lantern, which is eighty feet. The arrangements were under the personal supervision of Mr. G. Barter and Mr. Chick, the surveyor of the fabric. Wolsey's great bell, at Sherborne, which has been cracked for some years, has been taken down to be recast. The removal was quite ceremonial. In the balance it was found wanting. The weightbridge returned the weight at 2 tons 8½ cwt., instead of three tons. The bell was, according to the local journal, taken to the foundry of Messrs. Warner, in Cripplegate, by whom it was unhung. A great curiosity has lately been added to Berkeley Castle, namely, a "monster" Chinese bell. It has been raised upon a very ornamental iron frame in the outer court. It was brought from the ruins of a Buddhist temple at Tsokee, in China, which had been burnt by the Taipings in December, 1864. The bell bears the following inscription, which has been translated by Dr. Lockhart, medical missionary, from Pekin:—"Date, third year of the Emperor Kien-Lung (A.D. 1725). Put up in the autumn month on a lucky day. The following faithful officers, gentry, and believing literati

subscribed for the casting of the bell." The names are all given in the large lower compartments. Names of men, 250; of women, eighty in all. The latter are distinguished by a peculiar letter or character. The large upper compartments contain Buddhist hymns and prayers.

TOUJOURS LES FEMMES.

I THINK it was a Persian King
Who used to say, that evermore
In human life each evil thing
Comes of the sex that men adore;
That nought, in brief, had e'er befel
To harm or grieve our hapless race,
But, if you probe the matter well,
You'll find a woman in the case!

And then the curious tale is told
How, when upon a certain night
A climbing youngster lost his hold,
And falling from a ladder's height,
Was found, alas! next morning dead,
His Majesty with solemn face,
As was his wont, demurely said,
"Pray, who's the woman in the case?"

And how a lady of his Court
Who deemed the royal whim absurd,
Rebuked him, while she made report
Of the mischance that late occurred;
Whereat the King replied in glee,
"I've heard the story, please your Grace,
And all the witness agree
There was a woman in the case!"

"The truth, your ladyship, is this,
(Nor is it marvellous at all)
The chap was climbing for a kiss,
And got, instead, a fatal fall.
Whene'er a man—as I have said—
Falls from a ladder, or from grace,
Or breaks his faith, or breaks his head,
There is a woman in the case!"

For such a churlish, carping creed
As that his Majesty professed,
I hold him of un-kindly breed,—
Unleas, in sooth, he spoke in jest;
To me, few things have come to pass
Of good event, but I can trace,—
Thanks to the matron or the lass,—
Somewhere, a woman in the case.

Yet once, while gaily strolling where
A vast Museum still displays
It's varied wealth of strange and rare,
To charm, or to repel, the gaze,—
I—to a lady (who denied

The creed by laughing in my face)
Took up, for once, the Persian's side
About a woman in the case.

Discoursing thus, we came upon
A grim Egyptian mummy—dead
Some centuries since. "Tis Pharaoh's son—
Perhaps—who knows?"—the lady said.
No!—on the black sarcophagus
A female name I stooped to trace;
"Toujours les femmes!"—Tis ever thus—
There is a woman in the case!"

J. C. S.

WINIFRED'S SECRET.

I was watching my sister Winifred from the window. She stood in the shadow of a climbing rose, half way down the walk, the fragrant pink clusters drooping against her velvet cheek, and mingling with her silky curls as the breeze tossed them—as pretty a picture as that autumn sunset knew.

The tall, distinguished-looking gentleman with her was Gregory Blair, and one only needed to see him as he stood there to comprehend that he was quite as much in love with my pretty witch of a sister as—as it was possible for so great and rich a gentleman to be. Whether Winifred cared so much about him was another thing. I thought she did; but my sister was a spoiled child, and as full of whims as any pretty indulged pet could be.

I had never, however, seen her so much interested in any one as she seemed now to be in Gregory Blair. He was, indeed, such a man as would have pleased most women—handsome, accomplished and rich; and as I watched the two from the window, I was pretty sure that what I had long anticipated was coming to pass—he was asking my sister to marry him.

I was uneasy at that, for I was afraid Winifred would not keep a promise she had made to me—promise to the effect that she would never marry Gregory Blair without telling him of that old attachment of hers to Colonel Grey; not that I thought Mr. Blair had any romantic prejudices about first love, and all that, but I had seen him turn white as death

at the mention of Colonel Grey's name, and I had heard a rumour of old and bitter enmity between them.

Under these circumstances, I thought it only right that if he were likely to marry my sister, he should know all about her acquaintance with the fascinating colonel, though I should never have thought of exacting a promise from her to that effect if she had not insisted first upon one from me that I would never mention to Mr. Blair that we knew Colonel Grey.

When Mr. Blair at last went away, after a protracted and seemingly highly satisfactory conversation, I sprang to the door to meet my sister.

"Well?" I said, questioning her with my eyes. Her cheeks were pink with excitement, and her eyes bright. She laughed confusedly.

"He has asked me to marry him."

"Well?" I questioned again.

"I said yes."

"Have you told him about Colonel Grey?" was my next query.

"N—o."

"Then I shall tell him the very first time I have an opportunity."

"You will do nothing of the sort, Ellen. What do you want to plague me for?" she said, between laughing and crying.

"Why did you not tell him yourself, then?"

"Because—well, because I did not dare, if you must know. He would never love me any more if he knew; and oh, Ellen, I should be very wretched if he did not!"

She threw herself into my arms, and wept upon my shoulder in such a paroxysm of sobbing as to quite terrify me.

I had stood in my mother's place to her, and always patted her, you see, and she was more like a child to me than a sister.

I could not bear to see her in such grief, and I soothed and coaxed her till she was more quiet. But I had to agree to say nothing to Mr. Blair about Colonel Grey without her consent.

"He will be sure to find out some time, Winifred," I said, with a sigh. "I never knew a secret made of such a matter but that it all came out in the end, and made more trouble than it would have done at first. And indeed I don't see why it should make any trouble now; I wish you would tell him, dear, or let me."

"No, no, no!" with another burst of weeping.

"I really cannot see why not."

"Colonel Grey was such a bad man, Ellen. Gregory would be so shocked, and he thinks I'm little short of an angel now."

She said "Gregory" with such bashful sweetness, and allured archly to the angelic fiction, but I remained grave.

"We did not know that Colonel Grey was not all that he ought to be then, and there is nothing for Gregory, as you call him, to be shocked about. You were very foolish, that is all."

"He would never forgive me."

"In that case you certainly ought to tell him."

"Oh, dear, you know what I mean, Ellen; of course I shall tell him some time."

"When?"

"Just as soon as we are married, if not before. He will have to forgive me then."

"Don't you know, my dear," I said, despairingly, "that matrimony is a terrible magnifier? If Gregory Blair is capable of being so unforgiving on such a subject, the longer the truth is put off the worse he will be."

"Do let me have my own way, Ellen. He need never know that we ever heard of Colonel Grey till he told us, if you will be reasonable."

She had her own way, as she usually did indeed with me, though I did not yield this point without many struggles.

One way and another, she put me off, she was so pretty and loving and coaxing withal, and she and Mr. Blair seemed so taken up with each other; and then he was such a stern, stately sort of a man to everybody but Winifred, that it was a perpetual wonder to me how he came to love anything so childish as she was; and indeed I was too much afraid of him to be able easily to approach him on a subject so distasteful as anything was sure to be that concerned Colonel Grey, the more especially if it risked Winifred's name with his.

The end of it was, that they were married, and went on a bridal tour and came home to a grand style of housekeeping, giving parties and going everywhere; for Mr. Blair was very proud of his beautiful little wife.

They led a gay life, and seemed happy, and hearing nothing about any trouble, I hoped there was none, and that Winifred's foolish secret had ceased to exist. She never would tell me the truth of the matter; but one evening I was at a party with them, and who should appear among the guests, as presuming, haughty, some, and complaisant as ever, but Colonel Grey.

I treated him to the most distant bow I was capable of, and with my heart in my throat, hoped he would keep away from Winifred. But no. He crossed right over to where she stood, and spoke to her.

Her husband had gone to get her an ice, and he came back at this moment, before Winifred had rallied from her surprise and discomfiture.

Mr. Blair dropped the ice upon the floor in his consternation at the sight of his old enemy speaking to his wife, and while the fragments were being removed, he glared at Colonel Grey with a look that made me shiver, and other folks stare, till Winifred, with a hasty nod to the one, put her hand in the arm of the other, and led him away.

Half an hour after the carriage was summoned, and Mr. Blair, Winifred and I went home.

Mr. Blair was sternly silent. Winifred was noisily gay and chatty, and totally ignored the subject that was uppermost in all our minds, till her husband asked her bluntly how long she had known Colonel Grey.

"Don't be cross, now Gregory," said Winifred uneasily; "you know how you hate to hear his name mentioned, and so I did not think it necessary to tell you that I had formerly known Colonel Grey."

"Intimately?" growled Mr. Blair.

"Gregory!" exclaimed Winifred, "what a question! Is Colonel Grey the sort of person I would be likely to know intimately?"

I pinched my sister, and would have shook her if I had dared in the semi-obscenity of the carriage. Why could she not have told the whole matter out, as I knew now she had not? How much worse she had made everything by her foolish subterfuge, I dared not think, and was thoroughly wretched all the way home.

Mr. Blair was gloomy and morose for some days. Evidently he considered himself injured in not having been informed of his wife's previous mere acquaintance with his enemy. What would be his state of mind if he knew how much beyond mere acquaintance the relation between them had been, it made me ill to imagine.

Winifred was nearly frantic, when I urged her still to tell him all; for I saw no real way out of the difficulty, even now, but that.

Mr. Blair remained sternly resentful and cold, and was likely to do so.

My sister and I did not live together; I was only on a visit to her at this time, and was obliged to return home just when she seemed most to need me, and I was most anxious concerning her happiness.

I was not without hope, however, that the two would be better alone, she to reflect, he to see how pale and sorrowful she looked.

The truth was however, that Winifred was a very poor dissembler. The very childish timidity and lack of moral courage which had brought her into this strait, made her incapable of seeming like one who had nothing to conceal, and her husband found constant source of irritating suspicion in her fluttering embarrassments and confusion at the mention of Colonel Grey's name.

The morning I left them, Mr. Blair got a letter at the breakfast table which seemed to affect him strangely. He rose from the table, shaking from head to foot with passion, and went out of the room.

I was thankful that Winifred had not yet come down, and I bade her good-by an hour afterwards, hoping that all would come right with her in time, but with my heart heavy as to the prospect.

I had not been home six hours when Winifred burst into the house, her eyes wild and red with weeping.

"It's all over, Ellen," she cried, clinging to me; "it's turned out just as you said it would, and I've come to stay with you always, always now."

Her cheeks were hot with fever, and so were her hands, and in answer to all my questioning she only moaned and shut her eyes.

The very next morning I got a wonderfully thoughtful letter from Gregory Blair's housekeeper, informing me of Winifred's absence, and inquiring for her, and begging me to come to Mr. Blair, whose life was spared of. He and Colonel Grey had fought, and that was the result.

I did not dare tell Winifred, but she surmised or knew before. She let me go passively, however.

I found Gregory Blair very ill. It was some days before he knew me, and then he was for ordering me out of the room the first thing, because I was related to Winifred.

But I would not go. I stayed and told him what I thought of him, my opinion being founded on the information I had got from him in his delirium.

It seemed that the letter I have mentioned as agitating him so, was an enclosure from Colonel Grey of one of Winifred's old silly school-girl letters to him. Knowing Gregory's jealous temper, he had resorted to the small meanness of trying to rouse it in this way, and thus revenge himself for the haughty coldness

with which he had been so publicly treated by both Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Blair.

Gregory getting this letter in the state he was, was frightfully angry, and reproached Winifred in such bitter terms, that she, like the child she always will be, I think, incontinently ran away to me.

Missing his wife, Gregory Blair concluded at once that she had fled to Colonel Grey, whereupon, seeking and chancing upon that gentleman, he so grossly insulted him that an immediate resort was had to pistols for the settlement of the difficulty. Grey had to flee to avoid arrest, and Blair was not likely to be in a situation to ride such high horses as he had been riding, for some time to come.

I talked pretty plainly to him. I told him all the trouble had come from his unchristian spirit toward Colonel Grey in the first place, and his stern domineering spirit in the second, which last was enough to spoil the wits of any woman, especially one so timid as Winifred.

Of course I was perfectly conscious that Winifred was terribly in fault, but I wasn't going to tell him so, as I thought she had been punished enough.

As for him, he was so thankful that she had not gone off with Colonel Grey—driven away by his unkindness, as I told him—that he was ready to forgive anything; and he did.

In less than a week Winifred was home nursing him, and it was agreed on all hands to let bygones be bygones; an agreement which added materially to their happiness in the future.

C. C.

THE HEIRESS.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE HEIRESS FOUND.

Is she not more than painting can express,
Or youthful poets fancy when they love?

Congreve.

And there is ev'n a happiness
That makes the heart afraid.

Hood.

For more than twenty years had Harvey Grier searched for the missing child, or for some proof of her death; with the acuteness of a lawyer and skill that should have done credit to a detective, with a certain perseverance peculiar to himself, he had endeavoured by bribes and stratagems and deep laid plots to fathom the mystery.

Nor was his activity to be wondered at, for never was lawyer so richly feed. The resources from which the gold of the parties interested was drawn seemed inexhaustible.

Of late the letters had been dated "London," and as the days passed on the most magnificent promises were made in case of success.

The lawyer had discovered that the writer was a Mrs. Bertram, residing at —— Hotel, but what she looked like, and whether young or old, it was impossible to discover, as no one save a servant woman, who spoke broken Spanish, was ever visible.

Urged on by these anonymous letters and plenteous fees, Harvey Grier had spent twenty long years in secret search. These proving fruitless, he had resorted to advertisements, with equal ill-success. He felt confident that the heiress was still living; the chain of evidence indicated that fact clearly. But the double secret in which her disappearance was involved seemed unfathomable.

And now, by means of the purest accident, the lost heiress was discovered. The star on her arm, her features, all the mystery which surrounded her, proved her identity at once.

Now that he had her in a place of safety, he was overjoyed, and without delay wrote to communicate his success to his anonymous correspondent. An answer was received begging him to bring the young lady at once to Mrs. Bertram, at —— Hotel, and by the time it reached him his beautiful charge was fast recovering. Indeed, she was so well that the next day Mr. Grier sought an interview to acquaint her with the fact that her relatives were aware of her existence and anxious to receive her.

Instead of expressing astonishment, the young lady received him in a manner that had he not been the most self-possessed of mortals, would have confused him. As it was, he could scarcely resolve upon the proper course of action.

He cleared his throat and began:

"Miss—Excuse me; what shall I call you?"

"You know best, sir," said the young lady. "My real name is an enigma to me. As an heiress, doubtless it is something worth hearing, Mr. Grier."

Harvey Grier started.

"You know the reason of the interest I take in you, it appears," he said.

"I know you are a legal gentleman, Mr. Grier, and that you have been searching for me for many years. You have seen the red star on my arm, and I have here something I have hidden about my per-

son for a long time—the garment you describe in your advertisement."

She took from the stand at her side a parcel, and handed it to the lawyer.

He unfolded it.

It was a petticoat of white merino, made for the youngest of infants, fastened by silk strings, and embroidered in a magnificent pattern of leaves and grapes in scarlet. Among the leaves were skilfully wrought the letters "D. J. W."

"There is the proof," said the girl, quietly. "I presume the counterpart of that garment never existed."

"You are prepared to meet your relatives?" said the lawyer.

"Yes, at any moment. I am growing quite strong."

"In an hour, then, I shall call a carriage."

"Yes, if you please."

The lawyer hesitated.

"You will have no aversion to telling me why you have concealed your existence so carefully, or who has restrained you from claiming your name and inheritance? Explanations of this kind will be required by your relatives."

"I shall never give them."

"Madam?"

"Hear me, once for all, Mr. Grier," said the girl, "they may discard or receive me, as they like, although I know I am the person they have searched for so earnestly, but not for a kingdom—not for my life, will I, either to you or to them, offer the slightest clue to my past life. I was abandoned. Chance or fate, or I had better say, heaven, had brought me back to them. So let it stand. I will never tell by what name I have been called, where I have lived, or at what place, nor why I have never answered those inquiries which I have so long been aware of—never while life lasts—the secret shall die with me."

"Suspicion—" began Mr. Grier.

"Ay, suspicion will attach itself to me," said the girl. "It may; I care not. My lips are sealed."

And Harvey Grier, anxious and perplexed, bowed as in assent, and waited the arrival of the carriage, with a fear that this wilful creature might even yet escape him.

She made no such attempt, however; and was ready when he once more entered her apartment.

A lovelier creature he had never seen, and lawyer as he was, he trusted in her purity, and, old as he was, his heart beat faster as her hand touched his arm.

Together they drove to the hotel, and inquired for Mrs. Bertram.

The inquiry brought to the reception parlour a servant woman, who, in broken Spanish, requested that the lady and gentleman would follow her, and leading the way entered an apartment on an upper floor.

There the light was so subdued by curtains and shades, that, for a moment, they could but discern a form seated at the further end of the room, and heard a faint, shrill voice uttering exclamations or thanksgivings in the Spanish language.

At last, however, they became accustomed to the dimness, and saw the figure in the chair more plainly.

It was that of a very, very old woman, her face a mass of wrinkles, and her hair snow white. She was slightly bent, and her hands, which held a small bell between them, trembled; but those hands were small and loaded with jewels, and upon the black lace at her throat a diamond, of immense size, flashed and flickered.

It was the face of one who had been a beauty, with eyes that had glittered more than the jewels she wore, long, long before.

A face which awakened strange fancies, and made one think of ghosts arisen to walk the earth. A century must have well-nigh passed over that head.

She was the oldest human being the lawyer had ever seen.

Awe-stricken, he looked at her and marvelled.

Suddenly, this strange being stretched her arms toward the girl, and cried:

"Dolores! Dolores! Oh, I need no proof; it is her mother come to life again! The hair, the eyes! Ah, come to me—No, stop! I want proof—I will have proof! They shall have no reason to say I am in my dotage! The star-mark—the garment the babe wore—let me see them."

The girl advanced; kneeling before the old woman, she bared her arm. On its whiteness lay a rose-red star.

"Dolores!" said the old woman again.

Then unfolding something she had hidden until then beneath her shawl, she placed across the lady's knee a skirt embroidered in scarlet, in a pattern of grapes and leaves; and then, without a word, was clasped to that aged bosom, and sobbed over and caressed. At last the old woman lifted her eyes.

"I cannot doubt," she said; "I have seen the star;

I have seen the work of my own hands. There never was another garment like the one lying there. This is my great-grandchild; the daughter of my granddaughter—Dolores Inez Bertram. You have given me back my treasure. You shall be made rich for it. When I, who am past a hundred, speak it, it is taking a vow before God. Do not doubt me; but give me a pledge that you will never tell what I shall tell you. This is the child of my grand-daughter. She was a wilful thing. A beauty amongst the most beautiful girls. So her mother was before her; so was I. We had married strangers, and had English names. Mine is Bertram. Dolores' mother was left a widow early, and came home to The Palms—we named it so from the trees around it—to live with her children. We were extremely wealthy and greatly respected; and Dolores was our pet, our treasure; but she was wilful. There came to the place a man from London, named Wilford—a handsome, dissipated, bad bad man. He contrived to become acquainted with Dolores, and courted her. Her mother forbade him the house, and she ran away and married him.

"Ah, me! the young are always wilful, and she ran away with him, thinking to be forgiven. I'd have done it, for I loved her dearly. But her mother was stern—a cold, stern woman. So to her letters there was no answer, and we heard no more until a stranger from London brought us tidings. Her husband was a villain, and had married her for money, and when he found her mother would not forgive her he forsook her—wrote off with another woman and deserted her.

"Then her mother's heart softened, and she came here. For months she could not find her, but at last, hearing that a beautiful creature had been found wandering crazy on a country road, she went to look at her. It was Dolores, and she did not know her, for her mind was quite gone. So she brought her back to our home, and she lived only a few weeks; but before she died she told us how she had had a child—a daughter—and driven quite wild by her husband's desertion, had been about to drown herself and it with her, when a watchman stopped her. How after that she fled madness coming upon her, and thought friends were dragging her away, and could remember nothing more. But before that everything seemed plain. She told us of the mark on the arm, of its age, of the name of the village, and its situation, and that it wore a skirt I had wrought for her in her own babyhood. Then she said, 'Find my child for Dolores' sake!' and died with her head upon my arm.

"We were broken-hearted, for our darling had been our treasure, and we resolved to find her child; but we were proud—my daughter and her son prouder than I—and we resolved to keep our secret. They, as you know, strove all their lives for one object. They died unsuccessful. I, the oldest, have outlived them and my pride. In my old age I took this long, long journey to be near the man who was still searching for the child of my Dolores. And God has blessed me. She is found. I clasp her to my bosom. And now tell me who has hidden her from us?"

Harvey Grier looked at Dolores. She had sunk down upon her knees, and pressed her lips to the old woman's hand.

"Forgive me," she said; "I venerate you, I love you, but never, never will I reveal the secret of my past life. Love me as the daughter of Dolores, accept me as the child lost and found again; but do not ask what I will never, can never tell!"

At this moment a sound of knocking at the door interrupted them. The old woman started and gave a low cry. The eyes of the young girl turned towards the door, and the servant advanced to open it.

As she did so a gentleman pushed past her and entered, despite her efforts to prevent him.

It was Richard Rawdon.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A DEATH AND A CONFESSION.

A death-bed's a detector of the heart.

Young.

He looked at the young girl, and said, slowly:

"Old Grace is dying. Haste if you wish to see her alive. She has sent you a message which I give without comprehending. She bade me say, 'Tell her the secret is a secret no more. I will free her from it when I die.'"

The girl burst into tears.

"Take me to her!" said she. "Take me to her, Richard!"

"Away from me? No, no, Dolores; you will never return!" cried the old lady.

Dolores knelt at her feet.

"I swear to return; I vow never to leave you, and to answer frankly every question you may put to me. You heard the message; the secret will be one no

longer. But Grace has been good to me. I must see her ere she dies."

"Go, then," said the old woman. "And you, Mr. Grier, keep with my darling and bring her back to me."

The lawyer looked at the young lady.

"Come," she said; "you have a right to know all," and he obeyed.

A carriage stopped at the door. The three stepped into it, were driven to the railway station, and whirled toward Carltonville.

All were silent, but the lady spoke to Richard once.

"How did you discover me?" she said, and Richard whispered:

"By the light of love. I have never lost sight of you. Had danger threatened you I should have been beside you to protect you. And when old Grace began to call for her beautiful girl, and speak of you as having been with her at the time of the collision, I knew whom she meant and where to find you. Let me ask you one question: Do you know anything of Harold Shelburne?"

"Yes."

"Where is he?"

The lady looked at him a moment, then cast down her eyes.

"That miserable boy—that very mockery of manhood—will never offend mortal eyes again," she said.

"Is he dead?"

But the lady made no answer, and Richard gazed at her in astonishment. A fancy was in his mind—a strange, wild fancy, that made him think that he was mad.

In the upper chamber of the little tavern Grace lay dying. When those who had obeyed the summons entered the room, they saw that plainly. Her eyes were sunken, her breath came with an effort. But she had strength left to clasp the girl in her arms, and kiss her tenderly.

"The end has come," she said. "My confession must be made. Call the others quickly."

Dr. Rawdon, who was standing near her, obeyed, and in a moment Mr. Shelburne and Alfred Fairfield were in the room. On the former she fixed her dying eyes.

"To you I must speak, sir," she said. "I haven't long to talk, and if I die without confessing it, I shall never rest. I want God's forgiveness first, but yours next—yours next."

"Go back to the night the mistress died, sir, for I must begin there. You know you gave me the baby to take care of, and I was alone with it for days."

"The night she died, it cried and wailed as if it knew it was going to lose its mother. To quiet it, I gave it some drops, as I thought, but I made a mistake, and fed it instead with laudanum. I never knew I had done it until I found the child was dead, and then I thought I should go mad, partly with grief, and partly with the dread of punishment and disgrace.

"I think I was going out of my mind, when my brother, Davy Drew, the watchman of the town as long as he lived, knocked at the door.

"I opened it, and he had a poor little baby in his arms. Some wretched woman had left it with him, and ran away, after he'd kept her from drowning herself.

"The squire's was the place to take it first, he thought. But I told him your lady was dying, and he couldn't see you."

"Then the devil at my elbow put it into my head to make him take away the poor dead baby, and leave the living one with me."

"No harm," says Beelzebub. "It's only a grave, one place or another, and you'll make folks happy, and save yourself."

"So I coaxed Davy, and threatened and cried, until I had my way, and he took the dead child to the poorhouse, and I kept the poor woman's, and I thought no living being would find me out. But sin overreached itself. When everything was set it couldn't be undone, I found out that I'd made the maddest mistake, and done the most awful thing, for the baby was a girl."

"A girl? Great heavens!" cried Mr. Shelburne.

"A girl, and yours was a boy. Well, any one not crazy would have confessed then. I didn't. I just kept waiting—putting it off and hiding it still, until you went away. Then thinking for sure I'd die soon, I kept on hiding the secret. No one had any care of the child but me."

"So she grew larger, and I dressed her in such clothes as little boys wear, and no one knew, and you stayed away."

"Every time any one looked at the child, I expected them to guess. But they didn't."

"So she kept on growing until she knew the truth,

and then she loved me so, that for my sake she promised to keep the secret. But she found old dresses of her mother's and grandmother's, and would wear them now and then, in spite of me. That's where the ghost story came from."

"All this time she suffered dreadful from shame and fear. But she loved me, and she swore never to expose me until some one found out for themselves. No one did, until poor Mrs. North called for Harold to go with her."

"The moment she looked at him she said:

"You are a woman—a shameless woman, in men's clothes!" and that made us sure of discovery. Oh, you've been looking for Harold—you needn't say more—there—he stands—that girl! She has passed for your son for years! And—oh, hush—breath for one moment more—a little breath. I never have told you, but—your son—is not dead! I'd stupidly killed the child—not—killed it! He is—"

The old woman's voice failed her, but her dying finger was lifted and pointed towards Richard.

Mr. Shelburne stood petrified with astonishment.

"Am I dreaming?" he said. "This cannot be true!"

"It is!" said the doctor, solemnly. "My loss is your gain. Richard is the child whom the watchman brought to the poor-house, and who was then thought dead. And he is no longer my nephew, but your son."

He paused.

The father looked at his handsome boy, and stood with eager eyes and outstretched hands, and opened his arms, and Richard rushed into them.

While they stood in that long embrace, old Grace breathed her last; and the heiress gave her hand to Harvey Grier, and glided from the room.

CHAPTER XXV.

OLD GRACE'S FUNERAL.

None without hope e'er loved the brightest fair;
But love can hope, where reason would despair.

Lord Lytton.

It was a lovely morning. The sun was high in the blue and cloudless sky, and the white stones, washed by the last night's showers, stood upon a slate of snow amidst the velvet turf of the green graveyard.

Around a grave, but newly dug, stood a group. My readers will recognize Mr. Shelburne, Richard, and the doctor, and Alfred Fairfield. Their faces were solemn, their heads uncovered, for before them stood the bier on which reposed all that was mortal of old Grace Drew.

On the other side of the bier, a white-haired clergyman had just appeared to utter the solemn banns-service, and farther in the distance stood the sermons of The Pines and the villagers, whom interest as well as curiosity had drawn to the spot.

Suddenly, amidst the waiting silence, came a sound—the quick roll of carriage wheels, that paused at the graveyard gates.

All eyes were turned towards the spot. A carriage, drawn by milk-white horses, had drawn up in that solemn place; and from it a footman assisted two ladies to descend. One was Dolores, and the other the old lady.

They advanced slowly, the aged matron leaning on the girl's arm. Both were dressed in black, heavy, lustrous silk, which swept in gloomy folds over the green turf they trod so reverently.

Not a gem glittered on the maiden's bosom, not a jewel on her finger. Dropping her great-grandmother's arm, she knelt beside the bier. Tears fell from her dark eyes and trickled down her cheeks.

"You loved me," she whispered. "Despite the wrong you did me, you loved me, and I loved you. I forgave you long ago; and God and his angels have also forgiven you to-day. Farewell! farewell!" and rising, she drew back behind the group, waving her hand as though to forbid address or approach.

Then the old lady advanced.

"Dolores," she said, and the girl was at her side in a moment. "Dolores, she was good to the."

They stood together then, and the service went on its solemn end.

When it was over, the crowd of strangers dispersed, the servants of The Pines went home; Mr. Shelburne walked slowly away with the doctor; and in the graveyard remained only the heiress, her great-grandmother, Alfred Fairfield, and Richard Shelburne.

The former hesitated, the latter approached boldly.

"We meet once more," he said softly. "Yonder grave holds one who has done us both some wrong, who has woven much of sorrow into the web of our lives. Yet you have forgiven her, and I say amen. You are happy now?"

"Very happy," she murmured. "Yet I can scarcely

look you in the face for shame. What a life mine has been?"

"Do you remain here?" asked Richard.

"We shall live in London," said Dolores. "My aged relative could not bear the fatigue of another journey, and, indeed, I do not desire it. In the great city where we shall reside no one will know our story. It would be different in Cartonville. Probably I shall never set foot upon its soil."

Richard's eyes glistened.

"You will not forbid me to visit you?" he said. "Surely not, if you can forgive one who has acted almost as your enemy, who has stood between you and a father's home and heart so long. An impostor—"

"Hush, hush!" said Richard. "I am repaid for all if you admit me to your presence."

Then remembering Alfred, he began:

"There is another—my friend—" and turned toward the spot where he had a moment before been standing. He was there. As they began to speak he offered his arm to the old lady, and was assisting her to enter her carriage.

"I must join her," said Dolores, and Richard walked beside her over the turf.

It was but for a moment, but her hand was on his arm for the first time, and in all his life he never dared to remember it.

"Good-by," she said at parting. "You know where to find us, and you will be welcome."

Richard bowed over her hand, touched the folds of her black dress as he drew them from contact with the wheel, and as the carriage rolled away, stood bare-headed, with his bright eyes following the lady of his love.

A sigh accented him.

Turning, he saw Alfred Fairfield leaning against the paling, his cheek pale, his eyes downcast, his brow cast gloomily.

"My friend, you are ill," cried Richard.

"No, not ill."

"You have some grief then, which I know nothing of."

"Yes, Richard, my heart is very sad, and you are the cause."

"I?"

"You, Richard Shelburne. You have not forgotten our vow?"

"Forgotten that? Ah, never while I live can I forget it."

"We vowed to serve her, to deliver her, from enemies and danger."

"Ay, Alfred."

"She needs no friend now. She is rich, happy, shielded from all danger."

"Thank heaven!"

"Thank heaven, also say I! And we vowed that whatever befel us, we would be brothers."

"Brother, we did."

"God bless you, Dick! And I have the strength to keep that vow. Yet the trial is greater than I feared. I will confess. On that day I believed that, if I chose, I might win this mysterious beauty, whom at first sight we both adored. I sought to bind your friendship to me, that I might have the woman I adored without losing my brother. I play a different part. It is mine to crush down all anger against a successful rival. I have done it, but, dear Dick, forgive me, not without a struggle."

Richard Shelburne looked at him.

"A successful rival?" he said. "Explain yourself."

"Dolores loves you, Richard," said Alfred.

"Loves me?"

"Yes. I have seen it in her face, I have heard it in her voice. Who so keen as I to read that tale? She loves you, Dick. God bless you both. You have but to woo and win her."

"Are you sure—sure?"

"I could stake my existence on the fact."

"Alfred, I am happier than a king. Oh, forgive me, my brother! How selfish I am! Yet the joy, the bliss—Dolores loves me! It is too, too glorious."

Alfred smiled sadly.

"Your joy is my balm," he said. "Do not think of me; I shall conquer my own heart. Good-by, Dick. There is no fitter place to say farewell than this. To-morrow I shall leave my native land for the Continent."

"For the Continent! And when will you return?"

"When I can frankly grasp the hand of Dolores as the wife of my dearest friend," said Alfred. "The time will come; do not fear. Until then farewell, and may heaven speed your wooing."

He held out his hand, and Richard took it, and in the very act burst into tears—the first he had ever shed since the years of childhood.

"I purchase my joy dearly," he said—"at the cost of my dear friend's happiness. Farewell, farewell, Alfred. I shall always have a pang at my heart until

I hear that you have loved and won some girl as fair and pure-hearted as Dolores."

So they parted, and the sun sank the next day upon a vessel on whose decks Alfred Fairfield stood, straining his eyes to catch the last glimpse of his native land—the land he left that his vow might not be broken.

(To be continued.)

A RUSSIAN WOLF HUNT.

WOLF-HUNTING and bear-hunting are the favourite pleasures of the Russians. Wolves are hunted in this way in the winter, when the wolves being hungry are ferocious. Three or four huntsmen, each armed with a double-barrelled gun, get into a troika, which is any sort of a carriage drawn by three horses—its name being derived from its team, and not from its form. The middle horse trots always; the left hand and right hand horses must always gallop. The middle horse trots with his head hanging down, and he is called the Snow Eater. The two others have only one rein, and they are fastened to the poles by the middle of the body, and gallop with their heads free—they are called the Furious.

The troika is driven by a sure coachman, if there is such a being in the world as a sure coachman. A pig is tied to the rear of the vehicle by a rope, or a chain (for greater security) some twelve yards long. The pig is kept in the vehicle until the huntsmen reach the forest where the hunt is to take place, when he is taken out and the horses started. The pig, not being accustomed to this gait, squeals, and his squeals soon degenerate into lamentations. His cries bring out one wolf, who gives the pig chase; then two wolves, then three, then ten, then fifty wolves—all posting as hard as they can after the poor pig, fighting among themselves for the best place, snapping and striking at the poor pig at every opportunity, who squeals with despair. These squeals arouse all the wolves in the forest within a circuit of three miles, and the troika is followed by an immense flock of wolves.

It is now a good driver is indispensable. The horses have an instinctive horror of wolves, and go almost crazy; they run as fast as they can go.

The huntsmen fire as fast as they can load—there is no necessity to take any aim. The pig squeals—the horses neigh—the wolves howl—the guns rattle; it is a concert to make Mephistopheles jealous. As long as the driver commands his horses, fast as they may be running away, there is no danger. But if he ceases to be master of them; if they balk, if the troika is upset, there is no hope.

The next day, or the day after, or a week afterwards, nothing will remain of the party but the wreck of the troika, the barrels of the guns, and the larger bones of the horses, huntsmen and driver.

Last winter Prince Repnine went on one of these hunts and it came very near being his last hunt. He was on a visit with two of his friends to one of his estates near the steppe, and they determined to go on a wolf hunt.

They prepared a large sleigh in which three persons could move at ease, three vigorous horses were put into it, and they selected for a driver a man born in the country and thoroughly experienced in the sport. Every huntsman had a pair of double-barrelled guns and a hundred and fifty ball cartridges.

It was night when they reached the steppe, that is, an immense prairie covered with snow. The moon was full, and shone brilliantly; its beams, refracted by the snow, gave a light scarcely inferior to daylight.

The pig was put out of the sleigh, and the horses whipped up. As soon as the pig felt that he was dragged, he began to squeal. A wolf or two appeared, but they were timid, and kept a long way off. Their numbers gradually increased, and as their numbers augmented they became bolder.

There were about twenty wolves when they came within gun range of the troika. One of the party fired; a wolf fell. The flock became alarmed, and half fled away.

Seven or eight hungry wolves remained behind to devour their dead companion. The gaps were soon filled. On every side howl answered howl, on every side sharp noses and brilliant eyes were seen peering. The guns rattled volley after volley, but the flock of wolves increased instead of diminishing, and soon it was not a flock, but a vast herd of wolves in thick serried columns, which gave chase to the sleigh.

The wolves bounded forward so rapidly they seemed to fly over the snow, and so lightly not a sound was heard; their numbers continued to increase incessantly; they seemed to be a silent tide drawing nearer and nearer, and which the guns of the party, rapidly as they were discharged, had no effect on. The wolves formed a vast crescent, whose horns began to encompass the horses.

Their numbers increased so rapidly they seemed to

spring out of the ground. There was something weird in their appearance, for where could three thousand wolves come from in such a desert of snow? The party had taken the pig into the sleigh; his squeals increased the wolves' boldness.

The party continued to fire, but they had now used above half their ammunition, and had but two hundred cartridges left, while they were surrounded by three thousand wolves. The two horns of the crescent became nearer and nearer, and threatened to envelope the party.

If one of the horses should have given out, the fate of the whole party was sealed.

"What do you think of this, Ivan?" said Prince Repnine, speaking to the driver.

"I had rather be at home, prince."

"Are you afraid of any evil consequences?"

"They have tasted blood, and the more you fire the more wolves you'll have."

"What do you think is the best thing to be done?"

"Make the horses go faster."

"Are you sure of the horses?"

"Yes, prince."

"Are you sure of our safety?"

The driver made no reply. He quickened the horses and turned their heads towards home. The horses flew faster than ever.

The driver excited them to increased speed by a sharp whistle, and made them describe a curve which intersected one of the horns of the crescent. The wolves opened their ranks and let the horses pass.

The prince raised his gun to his shoulder.

"For God's sake don't fire!" exclaimed the driver;

"We are dead men if you do!"

He obeyed Ivan. The wolves, astonished by this unexpected act, remained motionless for a minute. During this minute the troika was a verst from them. When the wolves started again after it, it was too late, they could not overtake it.

A quarter of an hour afterwards they were in sight of home. Prince Repnine thinks his horses ran at least six miles in these fifteen minutes.

He rode over the steppe the next day, and found the bones of two hundred wolves. A. D.

THE BUTCHER'S BILL.

In all upper and middle-class households the butcher's bill is the heaviest of the weekly accounts. No people consume so much flesh-meat as the English; no people consume it so wastefully. And as, in consequence of our wasteful habits, we have a wide margin for retrenchment, it behoves every head of a family at the present moment to prepare to meet the difficulties of the crisis. A famine of butcher's meat will inevitably raise the price of all other articles of food, to say nothing of the rain, which, as we write, is ruining the harvest of 1863. Even these whose fortunes are so large as to render the amount of their daily household expenditure of comparatively small importance are in duty bound to set the example of a well-timed and judicious economy, in order that more food may remain for other families less fortunate than themselves.

The waste connected with our daily consumption of butcher's meat commences in the butcher's shop. The percentage system is calculated to make the cook "safe"—to induce the servant we pay to watch over our interests to betray them. Nobody, save the cook and the butcher, really knows what weight of meat actually comes into a house; indeed, in very few households is the daily supply of meat reweighed, when it is sent in. We count the dozens of wine we receive from the wine-merchant; we see our silks and our linen measured when we buy them; but for some unaccountable reason we take our butcher's accuracy and integrity upon trust. And as we have already pointed out, the butcher's is the heaviest of all our weekly bills.

The first step towards kitchen reform, therefore, that we should advise, would be that every joint sent into the house from the butcher's should be reweighed as soon as it is received. The next step will be to see that we get from that tradesman what we want and no more. If bullocks and sheep are scarce and dear, meat must be dear also; and we have no desire to enter upon the question of price, which must depend upon supply and competition. We are simply alluding to the vicious custom which exists in the meat trade of weighing in with the prime joints, for which the highest price is paid, quantities of bone, fat, flaps, and coarse pieces, almost all of which, in upper and middle-class families, are either thrown to waste or go to swell the perquisites of the cook.

In France, where the price of meat has usually ranged higher than in England, and where fortunes are not generally so large as they are with us, the method of retailing butcher's meat has been much more thrifty. A French *menuiserie*, wishing to buy the under portion of the sirloin—the *filet*—gets exactly

what she wants, and no more. Here, in order to obtain the *filet*, she has to take the whole sirloin, accompanied by a quantity of fat and coarse meat for which she has no need. Although in France she would have to pay more per pound for the *filet* than she would here pay for the sirloin, she would, practically, pay less; for in one case there would be no waste, in the other the waste would be great; and so it is with all other prime joints. The usage of the trade in England weighs in with them flaps and fat and shankbones, which must all be trimmed off and cast aside before they can appear upon the table.

Instead of buying our cutlets and chops ready for the gridiron or the casserole, we buy loins and necks of fat mutton, at least half of which are thrown to waste. The enormous weight of meat thus daily squandered in our kitchens would be most acceptable to the poorer classes, and could be readily sold to them by the butcher, for the inferior parts of good meat are far more wholesome and nourishing than the best parts of inferior meat, such as the poorer classes chiefly eat.

The second step, therefore, towards kitchen reform ought to be an arrangement with the butcher that every joint sent in should be closely trimmed for the table before it leaves his shop; and that if we want chops and cutlets, we should buy from him chops and cutlets, and not the entire joints from which they are cut.

Then comes the question of actual consumption—whether meat is to be eaten by everybody three times a-day, whether the servants are to have five meals a-day and hot joints for supper, &c. This must be left to the firmness and discretion of their employers. It is painful to think that those who work faithfully and hard for one's family are insufficiently fed; but still there is a limit to indulgence, beyond which it is absurd and wrong to transgress.

The most exorbitant daily consumption of butcher's meat to which a first-class family could fairly attain, has been placed at a pound and a half a-head. There is no difficulty in showing that this estimate is excessive. In every first-class family the consumption of fish, eggs, bacon, butter, and poultry is considerable, and all those items ought to diminish the consumption of butcher's meat.

Probably the best specimens of athletic well-fed Englishmen to be seen are among the gentlemen of Her Majesty's Household Brigade. They are all six feet high at least, they are all young and healthy, they are all in hard condition and work. Their appetites, therefore, may be supposed to be above the average, and although none of them, save their non-commissioned officers, are positively corpulent, they certainly bear no appearance of being stinted.

Now, if we reflect that a private family of—say sixteen persons, of whom one-half are women and children, dined according to the above estimate, on one pound and a half of meat a-head daily, besides butter, fish, poultry, bacon, and eggs *ad libitum*, consume exactly the weight which is found ample to maintain thirty-two Life Guardsmen in high health and vigour, without the accessories of butter, fish, poultry, bacon, and eggs, we think we have established the fact to which we earnestly desire to call public attention, that the usual expenditure of an English kitchen is so extraordinarily wasteful as to afford a wide margin for retranshment during the existing meat famine. An English soldier's rations are one pound of bread and three-quarters of a pound of meat per day.

A curious list is published of the families in France on whom Spanish sovereigns have on various occasions bestowed the high dignity of Grandessa, equivalent to that of a Duchié pairie, of which we read so often in St. Simon's graphic memoirs. In 1789 this rank had been conferred on the Dukes of Mouschi, Moalier, Cray d'Havre, Croy, Caylus, and Nivernais; the Princes de Beauvau, Chimay, Ghislé, De Robeck Montbarrey; Marquises d'Ossun and Bramas; Counts d'Hautefort, Périgord, d'Egmont-Pignatelli, Tenc, and De la Mark. Ten of the above noble families are extinct.

The gourmets of Paris are revelling in the anticipation of having this year one of the greatest yields of truffles ever known. A letter from the French capital gives a pleasant notice of the fact, and some circumstances connected with the mode of gathering this famous tuber, which may prove amusing:—"When last at Périgueux, a cultivateur in the environs surprised me extremely by the intensely respectful manner in which he spoke of the pigs that formed his hunting pack. He extolled especially their cleanliness and the high-bred delicacy of their taste. 'The pig,' said he, 'possesses a much finer organization than man, since he can discover at some four or five inches beneath the earth a savoury tuber, of whose existence, without his aid, our grosser faculties would have no suspicion. He it is who first tastes the upturned truffle, and we only pronounce upon it after he has

given his opinion. I respect the intelligence of the pig, and place him in the foremost rank of creation.' And, from a Perigordian point of view, my friend the cultivateur de truffes was in the right. He had made a purse, and a very long one, if not out of his sows' ears, certainly out of their noses. The extreme abundance of this most savoury of vegetables is everywhere talked of at this moment, and imagination prophesies *biftecks aux truffes*, *salade aux truffes*, *confitures aux truffes*, &c., &c. In fact, says one paper, *sous le vent des truffes*! while another expresses its belief that the probable result will be—a fall in the price of potatoes."

A WINTER IN ITALY.

By H. B. S.

(Continued from No. 127.)

HOW VENICE CAME TO BE.

VENICE is a phenomenon in this mortal life—a strange, exceptional thing—and the first thought which strikes one in floating up and down the glassy streets is—How came all this to be? What ever put it into mortal heads to build a city in this wise?

We woke to a sudden sense of ignorance, and feeling about in the dark, found our information to consist chiefly in scraps of poetry and romances, vague, mingled ideas of doges, councils, bravos, gondolas, the Bridge of Sighs, and other matters gathered from Byron, Moore, and Cooper.

But the whence and why has been very lucidly put by Sismondi on one intelligible page, and thus it was:

At the extremity of the Adriatic Sea were the extensive marshes called Lagunes, formed from the mud and slime deposited there by seven or eight great rivers. Amidst these marshes gradually islands had grown up, and when the northern barbarians ravaged Italy with fire and sword, these islands became a place of refuge to the inhabitants of neighbouring cities. During those troublesome years, when the old Roman empire was slowly dying out, this new community received constant accessions of fugitives. Thus a numerous population was formed who supported themselves by fishing, making salt, and by commerce carried on by these great rivers. Each separate isle was a democracy, and arranged independently its own affairs. The barbarians had no boats and could not come to plunder, and the Romans and Ostrogoths had more important affairs than to look after them, and so they grew and strengthened. At last, as the affairs of each separate isle grew more extended, questions of dispute began to rise between them, and in 697 the citizens of all the islands met in a general assembly, and elected a chief whom they called a Doge or Duke—a sort of viceroy of the Emperor at Constantinople. Venice regarded herself as belonging to the oriental half of the world, as one may see to this day in the character of her architecture. Her wars for many years were with western powers, who wished to claim her when she became rich and important enough to be claimed.

In 809, in a war against the son of the great Emperor Charlemagne, they chose the island of the Rialto for their central point, where they built Venice, the capital of their republic. Twenty years afterwards they began to feel the need of putting themselves under the special protection of some celestial patron, and so sending to Alexandria, they bought the body of St. Mark the Evangelist. His lion, now elevated everywhere in Venice, his form in every picture, his church bedecked with all the riches of oriental magnificence, attest the devotion of his votaries.

The Venetians were originally the aristocratic families of old voluptuous cities, full of ideas of worldly pomp and splendour; they grew up in a warm, soft, luxurious climate; their ideas and sympathies were all in harmony with those of the passionate, ardent, oriental races. They grew up, too, in a romantic period of the world, and a kind of peculiar poetry mingled itself with their very existence. Hence sprung a republic of men proud, brave, sensuous, voluptuous, fond of splendour and parade, and tinging all things in life with the warm, high colours of their half-oriental natures.

A small state, constantly watched by the German emperors on the one side, and battling with pirates on the other, their government assumed a form of jealous watchfulness and suspicious severity, and as they brought with them family pride and old family names, the seeds of aristocracy gradually grew and flourished among them, till at last the power passed from the hands of the people, and vested itself wholly in patrician families. Gradually the people were shut out from any voice in the election of the Doge or the grand council of state. Busy with their money getting, they were quite content to let their public affairs be taken care of by great families, whose mem-

bers were elected and re-elected, till the election became a mere form, and the people at last awoke, to find that the power had passed entirely out of their hands.

Venice was governed by a hereditary aristocracy of merchant princes; its constitution, when fully perfected, is described by Sismondi as "uniting some of the most odious practices of despotism with the name of liberty. Suspicious and perfidious in politics, and sanguinary in revenge, indulgent to the subject, sumptuous in the public service, economical in the administration of the finances, equitable and impartial in the administration of justice, beloved by the people who obeyed it, while it made the nobles, who partook of its power, tremble."

The final step in the concentration of power was the appointment of the famous Council of Ten, whose administration concentrated all that is possible to irresponsible power. The Council of Ten was a secret association formed from the larger council, and whose warrants overrode all other legal forms. They governed by espionage; their spies were in every family, in every bed-chamber; nobody knew when they were speaking to one. When they accused were secretly seized, secretly tried, secretly condemned, and often secretly executed. The Council of Ten were like the pikes that swim under a flock of young ducklings—every once in a while some one was drawn under and swallowed, and the rest looked at each other and sailed on. The horrors of such a government are inconceivable, and it comforts one in the occupancy of the Austria, that tyrannous as they are, they are no worse than the old oligarchy.

Such a system could not long raise up brave and valiant men, such as a state so precariously situated between great contending powers needed to make it secure. Venice was undermined and ready to fall, and when Napoleon took it, he only made manifest a fact that had long existed.

Since the time of its capture by him it has veered like its own seaweed, now this way and now that, between contending powers. Its pride and self-respect have sunk with its power, its old families have decayed and died out, and the stranger possesses its gates.

Yet even under the embers of Venice still slumber some live coals of patriotism and hope. The fair Bride of the Adriatic sits in torn and faded garments, looking wistfully out of her deserted palaces towards the day star that is now rising on Italy. Worn and faded and weary, she is all the princess still; and heaven speed the day of her deliverance.

(To be continued.)

GEORGE LINLEY, perhaps our greatest ballad writer, died recently. Out of 1,000 of his popular songs we may name, "Thou are gone from my gaze," "Ever of Thee," &c.

REGENT'S PARK.—A horse-chestnut tree which forms one of the many that border the broad walk of Regent's Park, now stands in full blossom, having been denuded of its leaves for some weeks past. It has put forth its second blossom of the present year, and is quite an object of attraction. A deep trench is also being dug parallel with the avenue of trees, which will be filled with concrete, to confine the roots of the trees, and prevent them from drawing their sustenance from the earth, preserved for the flower garden, for which they have been found to have a tendency.

A MONSTER OF THE DEEP.—On the morning of September 20th, between five and six o'clock, Mr. Henry Campbell, waterman, Custom House Quay, North Shields, caught with his boat-hook a fish called the sea-devil. Its length was four feet, and its breadth three feet. Its mouth when opened measured one foot each way. The entrance of its stomach lay one foot from the tip of the jaw. When internally examined there was found abundant proof of the indiscriminate capacity of its nature. This is the second fish of the kind captured at the same place within the last twenty years. The first was captured while making a pounce at the legs of a man standing upon the shore.

STREET AND RIVER CROSSINGS.—A paper on "Improvements applicable to the City of London and other large Towns to improve Health and preserve Life," by Mr. G. B. Galloway, was read at the recent meeting of the British Association, in which it was suggested that the Corporation of London or a joint-stock company should purchase all bad house property and rebuild the houses on an improved plan, a part of which would be the placing of iron bridges across the streets at intervals from one house to another as a means of avoiding crossings. Further facilities for crossing the Thames, and extra footways on the outside of the bridges, were suggested. As regards the purifying of the air of the streets, it was advised that at every window in every house and in every open space plants and flowers should be grown.



[THE MYSTERY OF THE WESTERN WING.]

THE STRANGER'S SECRET

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Seventh Marriage," "The Warning Voice," "Man and his Idol," &c.

CHAPTER LVIII

PROFESSIONAL PERJURY.

One

Who having to untruth, by telling of it,
Made such a sinner of his memory
To credit his own lie. *The Tempest.*

THAT highly reputable personage, Martin Harwood, who had sworn so stoutly before the coroner that the dead Neville Onslow was his son John, was under strict orders from his real living son, Cheney Tofts, not to approach the neighbourhood of the Manor House under any pretext whatever, without being specially summoned thither.

There was sound policy in this.

It was easy enough for an unscrupulous man of no conscience whatever to repeat the lying statement which had been put into his mouth; but it might have been difficult for him to support that statement, and to keep up his assumed character when assailed by the prying and curious, who were sure to gather round him in that neighbourhood.

A chance word might, obviously, have ruined everything, and Tofts was too good a tactician to subject himself to danger of that sort.

When he desired to see the old man in the way of business—and he never desired to see him from any but a business motive, father and son being united by no ties of affection—a line through the post brought him down by the next train, and they met in a private room at the *Load of Mischief*.

On the evening after Tofts' unfortunate recognition by the men at the railway station, such a meeting took place.

Tofts was first at the inn, and unusually restless and impatient he appeared to be. The Fates were against him, and he fretted and chafed against their adverse influence. A few days ago all had seemed so smooth, so easy, so favourable to his plans, and now everything went so contrary. Little things of no moment in themselves had risen up like mountains in his path; people as indifferent to him as the dust beneath his feet had suddenly sprung up armed for his destruction. The man Gidley he had never noticed, except as presenting a scowling face whenever he wanted to snatch a kiss from the blooming Ruth

As to the men he had met at the railway, he believed he had never set eyes on them before. And now it seemed as if these people were destined to defeat the brightest and most cherished prospect of his life. The one had robbed him of the papers necessary to establish his pretensions as Baliol Edgecombe, while the other had absolutely fixed his identity as John Harwood in such a manner that he despaired of getting over it.

These thoughts occupied his mind as he paced the sanded floor of the private room at the *Load of Mischief*.

There was not much in the place itself to draw him away from them. The yellow-washed walls were bare of ornament, except in respect of a coarse half-length portrait of a former landlord, in a highly apoplectic condition of face and body; a long wooden table and two or three Windsor chairs which constituted the furniture, unless an array of highly-polished pewter measures might be included in the list of it.

The only variation to the irritating topic of his misfortunes was afforded by an occasional recurrence to the face in the railway carriage.

He could not get it out of his mind.

It haunted him, and not without reason; for if it had been possible to believe that Baliol Edgecombe lived, and that this was the man, all his plotting, scheming, and striving was useless.

"But hang it, I must be deceived," he decided. "The Duke is somebody else in whom Doriani is interested. As for the likeness, that goes for nothing. Nothing so deceptive as supposed likenesses."

As he came to this conclusion the door opened.

It only opened wide enough, however, to admit the body of Martin Harwood, who had a habit of squeezing himself through a doorway like a cat.

He still wore the suit of mourning he had attended the inquest in; and it had not improved since that occasion. It had the general appearance of having been slept in nightly, while the hat, with its broad crimp band, was beginning to assume the shape natural to this man's hats, from the way in which he dragged them on his head like nightcaps.

"My dear boy—" he began, in a soft undertone.

"Dear idiot!" interrupted the loving son. "You've kept me kicking my heels in this hole over an hour."

"Couldn't be helped, John—" the other was beginning.

Tofts darted forward and seized his throat.

"Call me John again," he said, "and I'll murder you."

"Well, but—"

"I won't have it, I tell you," said the other,

shaking his parent before relinquishing his hold. "You know who I am. You've sworn to it. I'm Baliol Edgecombe, son of Sir Baliol Edgecombe, of the Manor House, and if you can't learn to remember that, why look out! That's all."

"You're a nice son, you are," grumbled the old man, settling his cravat with hands that from their colour were well in keeping with the mourning suit. Tofts glared.

"Do you want me to do you a mischief?" he asked. "Because if you go on with this bosh about sons, and the rest of it, I shall have to do it, and no mistake. Now, let's come to business. And first, you sent two men to Nestleborough to look after 'The Duke' as you call him?"

"Yes."

"They must be recalled and separated."

"What for?"

"Never mind. One must be sent to one part of the country—the farther off the better—and the other to another. Let them go on any pretext you can think of, and see that they stay where they are sent till I order them back. If it were possible to pick out a place in which a pestilence raged it would be so much the better."

"Why, John—leastways, Baliol—they've been with me for years," said Martin Harwood.

"I know they have," was the petulant answer, "and I wish to heaven you'd tortured them out of their minds, or into their graves. In a word, they recognize me, and must be got rid of. And now what of this man you write to me about—this Hool, Fool, what's his name?"

"Yool."

"And what is it you tell me of him?"

"Notin' more nor less than this," the other replied. "He 'ave seen a deal o' life, here, there and everywhere, and his memory is wonderful, for his age. Now, if there were anything you wanted swore to—"

"What?"

"Anything about a date or a hincident as was important in your case, he's the man. He'll remember and take his book oath of it."

"You mean to say that here is a man who has never seen me in all my life—"

"Oh, he may 'ave done so, you know," the other suggested, with a meaning smile.

"One who knows nothing of my affairs—"

"Only what he's picked up. Bless you, he's seen and heard a deal in his time."

"And he is ready to come forward and swear to facts just as they are needed? Is that so?"

"Just so."

"And you think I'm fool enough to go and put myself in such a man's power?"

Harwood rubbed his stubby chin with the brim of his hat.

"There's a many do," he replied.

"Impossible!"

"Bless your art no—he gets his living by it."

"By perjury."

"Well, he don't call it that."

"But it is that, whatever he calls it. He invents statements and swear to them?"

"No. They're mostly invented for him."

"But he swears—"

"Swears? Oh yes, he'll swear hard and fast."

"And the man on whose behalf he does this is from that time his victim."

Harwood shook his head, and a sickly grin spread itself over his unwholesome face.

"No, no; it don't work that way," he said.

"No?"

"Not a bit of it. He swears and you pays, and it's all over. To be down upon you he must convict himself o' perjury, and it wouldn't pay. Not it."

Tofts reflected for a moment.

His affairs were taking a turn in which he desperately needed aid of the sort this fellow Yool was prepared to give. It would, as he saw, be a hard fight to establish his identity as Baliol Edgecombe the younger. It was harder than ever now that Claudia Guiver's papers had been snatched from his hands in a manner which was still a mystery to him. Now, if this fellow Yool could be induced to speak with certainty on one or two vital points, it would obviously clear the way of a great difficulty.

That was a positive reason for engaging him.

Then, to put it in another way, if he declined this man's aid, in what direction was he to look for assistance?

"Show the man in," he exclaimed, as the result of these cogitations.

The professional perjurer entered the room, shown in by Harwood, as he would have entered a witness-box directed by the usher of the court. He held his hat over his heart in his right hand, with his left pressed open on the crown of it, and he half bowed, as to my Lord Judge, as he stood forward, and then stopped, confronting Tofts.

A little man was this Yool, with fox-coloured hair and fox-coloured whiskers and eyebrows, and apparently such a quantity of colouring matter of the foxy hue in his composition that it discharged itself in freckles all over his thin, hatchet face. Fuzive eyes hid themselves away under the foxy eyes, and there was about the man the general air of living constantly in a timid, mistrustful state, as if he was never certain of his personal security; but held himself liable at any moment to be called to account for his misdeeds. His attire was that of a man of limited means who cultivated the semblance of respectability, avoiding everything fast or flashy as calculated to militate against his credit and weight in the witness-box. "My service to you, sir," said Yool, bowing over his bat.

Tofts returned the bow.

"You are a—a—witness?" he asked.

"It is often my privilege to be able to render assistance in difficult and complex cases," replied Yool, evidently repeating a set form of words learned by rote. "I have seen much of life at home and abroad, and as I have a habit of observing and a retentive memory, my services are often in request."

"I have heard of you, I think?" Tofts asked.

"Possibly," replied the man, in the tone in which he was accustomed to answer cross-examining barristers.

"You have given important and unexpected evidence in several cases recently?"

"I have."

"You have even, I think, gone so far as to advertise in the newspapers that you have been possessed of facts, or have happened to witness incidents bearing upon such cases?"

"Yes, sometimes—rarely, but sometimes, I have gone so far," was the modest reply. "It was in that way that I had the pleasure of meeting my good friend Mr. Harwood here some years ago."

Harwood acknowledged the bow accompanying this with a grunt.

"Let's get on," he said, "business is business. I'll watch."

And he dropped into a chair near the door, and after stooping forward, so that his eyes could command a view through the keyhole.

Business was thereupon immediately proceeded with. Mr. Yool had not overrated himself when he said that he was a man of experience, with great powers of observation, and an excellent memory. He had lived much in foreign parts, in any foreign part in which Tofts wished him to have lived. He had moved in society of all classes, which accounted for

the readiness with which he recalled persons and families the moment they were mentioned. And as to his memory, it was so tenacious that it retained conversations which had never been held, and incidents that had never occurred.

The most fortunate circumstance was that Yool had lived in Spain. He recollects that the moment it was suggested to him. He had gone there as valet in the service of a nobleman who had died and left him friendless in that strange land. By to-morrow he was sure he should be able to remember the name of the nobleman, and the year in which this occurred.

"Have you ever happened to live in the village of Rosario, some twenty miles from Madrid?" Tofts asked.

"Singular coincidence!" was the ready answer.

"That was where the nobleman died."

"Then you remember the Chateau de Santa Fé?"

Tofts read the name from one of Ouslow's papers, which he drew from his pocket.

"Perfectly," Yool replied.

"I can give you a sketch of it," said Tofts.

"So much the better; my memory is assisted by sketches."

"Good. At the period I mention an English gentleman was living there in close retirement with a beautiful woman, a Spaniard, to whom he was privately married."

"Just so," replied the ready Yool.

The rumour went that he had run away with this lady from a plantation up the Amazon River in the Brazil—where he had been carried as a slave—after having shot down the proprietor of the place who hoped to make her his mistress."

"Ah, yes," said Yool, with a spacious nod of the head, "the story created a great sensation in the neighbourhood."

"Exactly. The Englishman was known as 'The Duke,' from some title which for the sake of security he temporarily assumed; but his real name was Sir Baliol Edgecombe."

"Ah! That oozed out, didn't it?"

"No doubt. Such things generally do. The lady's name was Idalia Guiver. Her mother was a widow of great family, but somewhat limited means, a native of Barcelona, and named Claudia Guiver. She recently died at Nealborough; but that you need not recollect."

Yool grinned.

"Sir Baliol's wife died within one year after their union. She left behind her one son. In me you will recognise the features of Sir Baliol's offspring, the idol of his life."

The man looked in the impudent face thrust close to his without a smile. This sort of thing was his business; he lived by perjury, and studied and elaborated it as if bearing false witness had been one of the fine arts."

"It is impossible that one could forget those features," he replied gravely, "the child is father to the man, especially in respect of nose and eyes."

"Good. I see you are getting a good general notion of my case, and now I shall want you to go into it slowly and carefully, and to remember much that is at present unknown to you. In addition to the sketch of the chateau, you shall have a description of the village, with the names of persons there whom you will mention accidentally, so that my papers may confirm your statement. You will recollect the name of my nurse, a tailor's wife, now dead, and many other minute particulars with which I shall refresh your memory. You will also produce your passport—"

"My passport?"

"Yes; the *fin simile* of my own; but with your name inserted in place of mine, and your description duly set forth. But leave that to me. Give me your address, and I will write to you when and where you may see me privately, and so as not to attract attention. You understand?"

Yool pressed his hat to his heart and bowed. Tofts bade him "Good night," but he hesitated.

"Mine is a sort of profession, sir," he said, "so you will pardon my 'inting that a little cash in advance is the rule with professional men. We can't recover at law, you see, and after we're done with, people are not that liberal as they ought to be, seein' the ventures and the risks we run."

Tofts took the hint and tossed the fellow a five-pound note, which was acknowledged with such a pressure of the hat to the bosom that it threatened to crush it flat.

Then Yool took his leave.

Even Tofts felt a relief at his absence, as one might do on getting rid of some noxious reptile, and as he glided out of the room, it would have been no great stretch of the imagination to have believed that he left a slimy trail as he went.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Tofts, "that this man lives by breaking the Ninth Commandment?"

"Possible!" growled his father. "Lots of 'em do it. See their advertisements in the papers any day you like."

And this assertion is literally true!

CHAPTER LIX.

WOONG.

Leave me! You never loved! Your wicked heart Choked up with perjury, brimful of art, Never had room for love to hold its place— Love is a lie you wear upon your face. *Olivia.*

It was dusk, and the stars were beginning to glimmer forth over the topmost branches of the trees, as Tofts quitted the *Lead of Mischief*, and strolled slowly back toward the *Manor House*.

Avoiding the white, dusty roads, he struck into a path leading through fields, heavy with dew, and fragrant with the clover blossom, and so, crossing innumerable rustic stiles, he at length gained an iron-wicket and entered the park.

It was almost unnaturally quiet.

Not a bird sang or twittered, and the air was so clear and still, that it was possible to catch the sound of the deer tearing at and munching the crisp grass.

"If I were to meet that confounded keeper hereabouts," he said aloud, "it would be the worse for one of us."

He looked from side to side as he moved along through the underwood, and his fancy transformed the stunted trees and dark bushes into human forms, standing or crouching; but it was only fancy. He was alone. That lonely and unfrequented corner of the park was utterly deserted.

"Nothing stirring," he muttered aloud, "not even the ghost."

It was easy to force a laugh at the expense of the *Manor spectre*; but it had a hollow, awesome sound, as it died away in the long protracted echoes, that made his flesh creep. The mystery of the spectral visitations he and others had witnessed was still a mystery, he remembered, and the thought caused him to quicken his steps.

"I wonder how the wretch I've just left would feel here?" he speculated, forgetting that though a professional perjurer might naturally suffer from qualms of conscience, the man who was paying him for his unholly calling, was, of the two, perhaps the more culpable. "I have my doubts about the policy of this day's work," he went on, "it's hazardous. Necessary enough, heaven knows; but full of danger. The slightest error may expose the whole thing. Well, well, I can but fall!"

The consequences of the failure presenting themselves in a vivid light—especially that form of consequence, penal servitude for life—he naturally quickened his speed still more, and was proceeding at a rapid pace, when, chancing to look up, he stopped short with a sharp cry.

Something before him.

A white, flickering, moving something between the trees, as they opened out in the distance.

His heart throbbed audibly.

"What is it?" he asked of himself, in a soft, low, earnest whisper.

It was moving on. He could see the flutter of drapery, white and filmy. The next moment it was gone. The trees might have hidden it, or it might have vanished into the air. Which was it?

While he hesitated, not advancing a step, it came again.

Tofts was not a coward; but he did not move an inch forward.

He could not.

Awe, terror, some indefinable feeling chained him to the spot; while he stood transfixed, the object grew fainter, vanished, then appeared through a nearer vista—reappeared, and this time—advanced toward him!

He had it in his mind to cry out, to run, to secure his safety in any way, when the speed with which the object advanced, suddenly brought it within his range of vision.

With an exclamation of delight he bounded forward.

In the supposed ghost he recognised only Flora Edgecombe in the white dress she usually wore during the warm summer evenings.

Almost at the same moment she recognised him and instantly drew back.

"Mr. Tofts!" she exclaimed, with genuine surprise.

"Yes," he replied, "it's your most devoted, and delighted to see you, though you have pretty well frightened me out of my senses. I took you for the family ghost; and that's the truth; but since I've found out my mistake so agreeably, permit me to offer you my arm. You're going back, of course?"

"I'm simply strolling, thank you," Flora replied.

"But I've something to say to you," he persisted, "and we couldn't have a better opportunity. You heard my proposal the other day?"

"I heard your threat," she answered bitterly.

"No matter for words," Tofts replied, cavalierly.

"I made you a fair, and under the circumstances, a handsome offer, and if you compelled me to go further

than I meant, and to convince you that I had good ground for the position I had taken up, it wasn't my fault. But that's neither here nor there; you have had time to consider my proposal, and I've a right to expect that you're prepared with an answer."

Flora trembled with indignation.

"You forget yourself, sir," she replied. "Nothing in my conduct has warranted you in addressing me in these terms."

"As to that," was the answer, "what's the use of beating about the bush. I know that I think a deuced deal more of you than you do of me. That's clear enough. Besides, you've as good as told me so. Very well then; if you take me, it's because you'd secure a home for yourself and those about you, and because I've got it in my power to go a step beyond reducing you to beggary, the whole family of you. If you doubt me, ask Sir Noel. Ask him if he can afford, if he dares to set me at defiance!"

Alas! That very question had been asked, and Flora remembered but too well the answer she had received. That Sir Noel had indiscreetly given this man some influence over him, she did not doubt; at the same time she resolved to withstand to the last the advances Tofts was making, in the hope that some piece of good fortune would relieve her from what she regarded with so much repugnance.

"I say," repeated Tofts, finding she was silent, "ask him."

"Is it a pleasure to you to torture me?" she asked, abruptly.

"No. I love you. I have told you so."

"For heaven's sake, peace," cried Flora, with a sickening sensation at her heart. "Love me? You love me! Let us have done with this mockery. Whatever your motive in seeking my hand, it is a selfish one. Whatever feeling I may have unhappily inspired in you, prompting the step you are now taking, it is not love, it is not consideration, it is not even respect for me. None of these sentiments could animate the heart of a man who dares tell me that I am the price at which he puts my father's safe y. But enough of this; and as to my answer to your suit, I can only say that at present my brother's fate wholly engrosses me, and I can think of nothing else."

"And you think you are serving Gabriel by treating me with this haughty scorn?"

The eyes of the high-born girl flashed fire.

"Do I understand you aright?" she demanded. "Are you base enough, wicked enough even to hint that my brother's fate depends on my answer?"

"Well—"

"That you have it in your power to sport with his life, and that you would sacrifice it to punish my loathing of you? Is this so?"

Tofts hesitated.

"Surely you can take a hint?" he asked, in his free, coarse fashion. "It isn't difficult to strengthen or weaken evidence, just as it happens, but 'tisn't worth while to go into that. I've made you a fair and, on the whole, a generous offer, and I've shown you that, in accepting it, you save your father from an exposure that may end badly for him. Now, when shall I have your answer?"

"When?"

"You. Fix your own time, and then I shall know what I've to expect. But mind, I don't wait till this affair of my claim is settled. None of your having me if I prove my case, and throwing me over if I don't, mind that. Now, then, when am I to have the answer—yes or no?"

Burning with indignation, Flora turned away.

"To such language," she replied, bitterly, "I have no answer."

"And pray why not?"

"Because it is such as no gentleman would address to a lady."

Tofts fired up. He had been touched on a sore point.

"Oh, indeed, you have been put up to my being 'no gentleman,' have you?" he demanded. "Some of the doctor's doings, eh? Or your precious father's. We shall see—and-by who's the gentleman and who isn't; and as to my language, it's plain and straightforward and honest, and such as I've a right to use. Jove, I should think so indeed!"

"At all events," said Flora, greatly hurt, "I must decline to continue this conversation. When I give my reply to your proposal, and what its nature may be, will depend on many circumstances."

"Oh, it will, will it!" returned the other, exasperated at her coolness. "Very well. Only just bear one thing in mind. I'm not speaking without book when I talk of my power in this family. Noel knows that; he's perfectly satisfied that I am his brother's son, and that every hour that he and you remain in this place you're doing me a wrong."

"That is the question to be decided by the proper tribunals," said Flora, with provoking calmness.

"Yes," retorted Tofts, "and that isn't the only

question they'll have to decide, if you don't look out. 'Tisn't for nothing that Noel stands in awe of me. 'Tisn't for a trifl that he gives his reluctant consent for me to pay you my addresses. If you doubt me, ask him."

"My father?"

"Ask him if it is true that I claim your hand as the price of his life?"

"His life?"

"Those are my words. Ask this, and perhaps when next we meet you will condescend to fix a time when you will return an answer to my suit. Good night!"

He raised his hat with a caricatured assumption of deference, and was about to retire.

"One moment," cried Flora, raising her hands imploringly. "You know that I cannot listen to any tale of guilt or shame from my father's lips. It would kill me. But if this is no delusion, if you are not working upon his fears and seeking to enslave him with some idle pretext, give me the means of verifying the truth of your boastful statement."

Tofts hesitated.

"You decline. At least answer me one question," said Flora. "Is this secret connected with the fate of the man you call your father, Sir Baliol Edgecombe?"

"Jove, you've hit it this time," was the reply.

"You believe that he met with a violent death, and that it was by my father's hands?"

"Why, how do you know this?" asked the other, in astonishment.

"No matter. Enough that I do know of these suspicions, and beyond this, I know they are unfounded."

"Because Sir Noel has told you so?"

"And what then?"

"Then he will not hesitate to trust you with the secret of the mystery of the western wing of the Manor House."

With these words, Tofts again bowed, and retired, leaving Flora Edgecombe looking after him aghast.

CHAPTER LX.

THE MYSTERY OF THE WESTERN WING.

On ev'ry side the aspect was the same,
All ruined, desolate, forlorn and savage;
No hand or foot within the precinct came
To rectify or ravage. *Tom Hood.*

The effect which words produce on those who hear them does not depend wholly on the words themselves.

An expression casually dropped may have the effect of a spark on a powder mine, simply because the hearer's mind is charged to receive it.

So it was with the last expression Tofts had used. It seemed to light up and bring vividly before the eyes of Flora Edgecombe much to which she had hitherto been blind. The "mystery of the western wing," simple words in themselves, awoke a train of reflection that recalled not only much which she had passed unheeded, but much that she had absolutely forgotten.

It recalled to her how visitors at her father's table had often expressed a natural surprise at the neglected state of that portion of the building, and the singular pain which such remarks always appeared to occasion her father. There was no reason on the surface why he should have been thus moved. Again, she could not but recollect the scrupulous care with which all the doors leading to that wing were blocked up, and the strict injunctions given to the domestics that on no account should they enter that proscribed part of the mansion.

And then the night of the fire—that mysterious fire for which no one could account; was it possible for her to forget how strangely Sir Noel had acted then? His manifest terror lest anyone should venture into the place exceeded even his apprehension for its safety. That she well remembered. And no less vivid was her recollection of the fact that when all was over her father had denied himself refreshment and rest until an impassable barrier had been raised about the charred and smoking ruins.

Thinking over all these things by the light of the expression Tofts had used, there was one other point which came out in broad relief in her memory. Neville Onslow's presence in the burning wing, at a time when he was supposed to be at the other end of the county, was mysterious, and had never been explained. Nor had Sir Noel's terror at the discovery that it was he whom Gabriel had found there, and had saved at the risk of his life.

All these things put together suggested—what?

Clearly that some crime had been committed in that part of the Manor House, of which Sir Noel Edgecombe was at least cognizant.

Of this Flora was convinced.

Then what was the nature of the crime?

On this point the pencil endorsement on that letter of Sir Baliol Edgecombe's stolen from Claudia Guiver shed a direct light.

"That part of the house conceals some clue to the hapless Sir Baliol's fate," Flora decided, shuddering as she did so, "and this clue, known to Tofts, is sufficient to compromise my father. Thank heaven! I have drawn from him an admission that his hands are unstained with blood. Those were his words, and I must believe him; but how far he has placed himself within the limits of danger, I have yet to learn."

While speaking she drew near the Manor House.

A few lights glimmering here and there through the trees showed where it stood; but its aspect was frowning and gloomy in the gathering night. It had none of the splendour of bygone times, when, crowded with guests, it had exhibited long rows of shining windows, giving it the appearance of being illuminated from roof to basement. A change had come over the old place—a sad and terrible change—

For over all there hung a cloud of gloom.

A sense of mystery the spirit daunted.

And Flora, who had spent a happy childhood in the old place, felt this acutely in the existing desolation of her heart and of her life.

Little disposed for company, she drew her light shawl closely about her shoulders, and wandered to and fro on the lawn, and along the paths which led here and there through the gardens surrounding the house. Presently, becoming weary, she seated herself in a rustic chair, which formed a favourite retreat of hers in the summer weather. It was placed in a sheltered nook behind one of the buttresses of the older portion of the house, and was both quiet and secluded.

At this hour it was only just visible by the faint light from several windows above it on the second floor.

Two of these appertained to Sir Noel's study, and Flora, looking up, perceived that the casements were open for the sake of the little breeze stirring.

It was very little, for the night was sultry, and so still that hardly a leaf stirred.

Absorbed in her own reflections, it was some time before Flora became aware of the sound of voices in her father's room. On a sudden they became louder, as if those conversing had broken into angry altercation.

Flora could hear distinctly what passed.

"You have deceived me," she heard her father say. "I had at least a right to be treated with fairness by you, and you have deceived me in the grossest manner. I had your assurance that those papers were destroyed."

It was Doriani who answered.

"I suppose it is a characteristic of mine," he said, "but I have a dislike to destroy papers. These, however, I considered as good as destroyed."

"Better," retorted Sir Noel, with bitterness, "since you could at any moment bring them to bear against me. You are one of the worst class of hypocrites; so smooth, so insinuating, and so deadly. You would deceive even men of your own stamp."

"I would try," replied the other, mockingly.

"As it is, a special providence has given these documents into my hands, and they no longer exist."

"Then there is no need to say more," rejoined Doriani, complacently; "only the less you say about special providence the better, I should think. Were I Providence, you are not just the man I should go out of my way to serve."

"That is beside the question," Sir Noel replied. "It is enough that all this dangerous evidence is destroyed, and no thanks to you. But suppose they had got into the hands of this impostor, Tofts? Added to what he already knows, they would have rendered it impossible for me to struggle against him."

"You allude to the secret he has gained possession of?" asked Doriani, in a peculiar tone.

"Yes; that which he has discovered in Onslow's papers; though how Onslow became possessed of it is indeed a mystery."

"Might not your own manner have roused his suspicions?" asked the doctor.

"Surely not. How was that possible?"

"Your trepidation and evident terror at the mere mention of the west wing—"

"Not unfounded, if I can believe you."

"If you can believe me?"

"Yes. If you have not deceived me in this as you have done in the matter of destroying the papers?"

Doriani was evidently startled.

It was with a contemptuous sneer that he answered:

"If you doubt me, why not satisfy yourself. The secret door in the library leads to the west wing, and the third panel on the right is the entrance to the

crypt. Descend, examine for yourself. Nothing is easier."

There was something inexpressibly painful in the tone in which the baronet answered.

"You know that I have attempted this, and you know what happened. You know that, overcome with terror—for I am a coward in crime, and I admit it—I dropped senseless upon the floor, while my lamp originated the flames which all ascribed to the lightning of heaven."

A short, sharp, sardonic laugh was Dorian's commentary upon this statement.

Flora heard no more. Perhaps the voices ceased, or the window might have been closed, or even the strong feelings which these words awoke in her might have overpowered her. It was long after that she quitted the seat she was occupying and entered the house, moving along like one in a dream.

This mystery of the western wing to which Tofts had alluded, and which was evidently an important point between her father and Dorian, held her like a spell.

She could think of nothing else.

It was clear to her that this was the source of the influence which the doctor had for years exercised at the Manor House, while it was equally evident that Tofts relied upon it wholly in his project for making her wife.

What was this secret, then?

The question became overwhelmingly important, both to her father and to herself.

It seemed that night that the answer to it would affect the future of herself and all who were dear to her. It seemed as if that answer was of an importance so great that no sacrifice was too great to acquire it.

The more she thought it over the more strongly was this impressed upon her.

Both Dorian and Tofts were working upon her father's fears. That was obvious. She had long suspected that this was the source of the Dorian influence, but attributed it to the doctor's confidential knowledge of Gabriel's strange malady. What she had overheard threw a new light on the matter. She saw now clearly and distinctly the real position of affairs.

"My father's terror makes him a puppet in the hands of those men," she said.

Then, after long reflection, a sudden and daring resolution shaped itself in her mind.

"I will do what he cannot," she exclaimed, half aloud. "I will investigate for myself, and learn the real cause and nature of this mystery. I will do it, and to-night."

Full of this purpose, she retired to rest early, on the plea of melancholy and indisposition. By so doing she got rid of the attentions of her maid before the customary hour, and being thus left to herself, she made her preparations calmly and with the utmost deliberation.

For the sake of safety, the servants were in the habit of using closed lanterns in going about the house after dark. One of these had been left in a corner of Flora's wardrobe long since, and this she now drew forth, examined, and lit. It would, she calculated, burn several hours. The question of providing a weapon next engaged her attention, but after turning it over in her mind she decided against it. True, the place was lonely and deserted; but it was not likely to be the resort of any human being. The terrors she had to anticipate were not those against which any such precaution was available. What she had most to fear were the creations of her own excited imagination, and such discoveries as by their dread suggestiveness might alarm and overcome her.

Having decided this point, Flora Edgecombe selected a book from a dozen on a stand near her bed, and opening it, by way of pretext for sitting up, in case anyone should enter the room, she sat down to wait till the household should have retired, and the house be at peace.

It seemed an interminable time till this happened.

Eleven o'clock sounded from the stable clock; then twelve boomed forth, then one.

Still the solitary watcher could hear voices, at intervals, and occasional footsteps, while the turning of keys in locks and other domestic sounds warned her that some of the inmates were still stirring.

At length every sound died away.

A profound, an awful silence pervaded the house.

It combined with the grandeur, the desolation of the tomb.

Then Flora rose, and opening the door of her chamber, looked forth. It was a dark night, and the corridor stretching on either side the door was black to the eye. She opened the lantern. The vivid ray of the unimprisoned light startled her: it seemed as if what was so bright to her eyes, must open those of others. So, in alarm, she drew back, and hesitated; then feeling the overpowering necessity of the task she had undertaken, she darted forth.

"The secret door in the library leads to the west wing."

She recollects those words, and her first step was to descend to the library, which was on the ground floor, and not far distant. The door was ajar, and on reaching it she peeped in.

It had a ghostly aspect, that vast room dimly revealed by the strange light. Hanging wrappers of holland covered up the book-shelves, and here and there a bust on a pedestal, protected in the same way, presented a startling aspect. The features of the marble faces were dimly outlined, like those of the dead beneath a sheet.

The secret door might have presented an insuperable obstacle, but Flora had, fortunately, surprised the secret of it years and years ago. She had entered the room suddenly when a child, and to her astonishment had beheld a door, with the back painted in imitation of volumes of books, standing open. Having at that time nothing to conceal, Sir Noel had explained the nature of this to his child, and had shown her the spring by which it was opened, a circumstance that had long since passed from his mind.

Flora now availed herself of this knowledge.

Within a few moments she had opened the door, had passed through, and was descending a winding stone staircase.

This terminated at another door, with rusty key in the lock of it.

Flora's strength hardly enabled her to turn that key; but when the feat was accomplished, the door grated open on its hinges, and there was a cold, damp rush of air which must have extinguished an exposed and unprotected light.

Upon the lantern Flora carried it produced no effect, and summoning all her strength, she passed through the doorway.

Then she was in the chapel which her ancestor had desecrated by converting it into a dining-hall. It was now nothing more than a ruin. The recent conflagration had told upon it most powerfully, and the baronet's daughter shuddered as she found herself amidst a labyrinth of charred and blackened timbers, apparently threatening her with destruction.

But she dared not indulge her fears. The purpose for which she had come there must be accomplished, and that while nerve and strength would serve her. Bearing in mind Dorian's taunting words, "the third panel on the right," she hastily scanned the wainscot with her lamp.

There was the third panel, and in the corner of it a spring similar to that of the secret door in the library. Time, damp, or the effects of the fire rendered this hard to move; but it acted under pressure, and the panel slid back, revealing the descent to the crypt.

This also consisted of a narrow flight of stone steps.

An earthy and revolting smell assailed the intrepid girl's nostrils as she prepared to descend; but she was not dismayed. She did not even hesitate, but gathering up her skirts around her, descended step after step.

The staircase terminated in a low groined vault, the first of several constituting the chapel crypt.

The first vault was quite empty.

The second, into which it opened, was obstructed with lumber, rotting timbers, and fragments of carved masonry, evidently removed here during the alterations by which the chapel had been converted into a hall adapted to secular purposes.

Passing through the first and second vault, Flora reached the third. That also was choked with lumber; but there was an open cleared space in the centre of it.

The light of the lamp fell upon the space an instant, and was then extinguished with a crash.

It had fallen from Flora's hand as on looking down her eyes had detected the white bones of a skeleton lying on a stone floor.

(To be continued.)

PARISIAN SPORTING COSTUME, &c.—Has any of your readers had the supreme happiness of contemplating a genuine Parisian arrayed for the chase? Verily, Solomon in all his glory was not like one of these. I peer at in the great Schneider's window, and examine that splendid model of a "gentleman chasseur" he sometimes exhibits. The coat is of velvet, the facings of silk, frogged and braided, and full, literally full, of pockets of every size. The upper part of the vest is open to exhibit the *chemise de fantaisie*, the neck rendered *dégagé* by the flowing ends of a rainbow-coloured tie. The breeches are of the baggy Zouave shape, with little jet tags or buttons running down the sides—admirable, I should think, for pushing through a good thick covert. These are met by leggings of a light buff, ornamented after the fashion of those of an Albanian. The boots I did not see, but imagination will readily paint them as made

of the best doeskin, with tips of patent leather. The cap was basin-shaped, of black velvet, with a long peak, and ornamented with a red tassel and a cock's feather. The shoulder was crossed by a tartan plaid, while by the side of this Nimrod was suspended a bag something in size and appearance like a ship's hammock. Behind him, in a leather case, was his gun, and ready to his hand was the broad-bladed hunting-knife so necessary when a hare is brought to bay, or in digging out of his subterranean retirement a wounded rabbit. This is the superb foreign "sportsman" our Leech so loved to sketch—a mixture of Rob Roy, William Tell, Romeo, and Dugald Dalgety. You can see his model in almost any of the "emporiums" on the Boulevards; but your correspondent has had the infinite happiness of seeing him in the field, a sight to make a young man old with envy, and each individual hare to stand on end with astonishment.

ENGLAND'S GREATNESS.

The burdens of taxation are laid upon the rich; and so lightly do they fall upon the labourer and artisan that they may live in England without contributing one penny towards the support of her government. That is to say, they may live upon meat, bread, butter, milk, and heaven's best gift, pure water. Upon these necessities of life a tax is laid. It is only when the working man indulges in luxuries that he contributes towards the taxation of the country. This perhaps can be said of no other nation under heaven.

But not only territorially and politically, but also commercially, is England's greatness seen. How vast is her commerce. There are few sights more imposing, or more calculated to impress the foreigner with England's unbounded wealth and greatness, than the forests of masts upon which his eyes rest as he ascends the Thames. So great is the number that you are almost ready to imagine that all the ships of the world had been collected and assembled in its course.

Yet the port of London contains but a remnant of England's great commercial fleet. The shipping in the Mersey almost equals that of the Thames. Add to these Hull, Bristol, Cardiff, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and other places, and the aggregate is something astounding. Yet great as is the aggregate, it must be duplicated with our ships spread throughout the world.

Again, England's manufacturing districts are gigantic hives of industry. Her manufactures are exported to all the ends of the earth, and but few are the families in the civilised world who do not possess articles of English manufacture. Indeed, England may almost be said to furnish the earth and clothe the world! Of the prodigious quantities of England's manufactures some idea may be formed from what a single firm can produce. Some time back, when in Leeds, I was told of one house spinning yarn daily sufficient to pass thrice round our globe! So vast is the machinery of England, that we are in a position to manufacture articles exceeding in quantity the productive powers of the whole male population of the world.

Everything connected with England is of a colossal character. Her national debt exceeds the whole wealth of the world; and yet this enormous debt adds to her greatness: it is only so much ballast to the State vessel, giving us additional stability and security.

Again, look at England's greatness from another standing-point. In her moral grandeur she will not be found inferior to her physical greatness. Science, literature, and general education receive fostering care and munificent patronage: and her monuments of benevolence are upon a scale of magnificence which eclipse everything like it elsewhere.

But the climax of England's greatness is to be found in her religious institutions. The religious element is the real secret of England's real greatness, and without this element she would infallibly descend into moral, social, commercial, and political littleness or baseness.

But England, as if unsatisfied with any evanescent greatness, as if a greatness for the present or for posterity were not sufficient—seeks a boundless and imperishable greatness—an eternal glory. In her physical and commercial grandeur, her ships traverse every sea and ocean. She has peopled another world, and established her fame throughout all habitable space. But in her sublimer character, she has not only covered her own land with sacred temples, but she has transplanted living holy temples to every corner of the earth, to rescue from death such as "live without God and without hope in the world." In the great day of reckoning, when the nations shall be assembled to give in their account of what they have done for the world, what nation will have so many trophies, so many converts, as our own?

Thus, when we view our country, the British Empire, territorially, politically, commercially, morally, and religiously, we are impressed with her unparalleled greatness and grandeur. The phenomena of the British people affords ample material for speculation equally for the philosopher and the moralist.

In whatever aspect we view the English nation, it is a remarkable people. Numerically insignificant, occupying a little island in the mighty waters, yet she governs something like 200,000,000, or nearly one fourth of the human race; and her territory comprises an area exceeding the whole of Europe, and encircles the earth!

OVER THE QUICKSANDS.

CHAPTER I.

DEAD.

THE sun, a great red disc, was sinking slowly into the ocean.

The gay little pony-carriage rolled briskly along over the hard, white sand, the silver-bitted, high-stepping thorough-breds dexterously managed by the fairest amazon that ever drew the reins, Idyl Lee, the reigning belle of the season.

Fair, indeed, most gloriously fair, was this blonde beauty; fair to the exclusion of all other fair ones; utterly, entirely, trobly so, with regard to her companion.

What could she have been thinking of—this other one—low-bred, heavy-eyed, white-lipped, a look as expressionless as the dead, leaning listlessly back in the corner of the carriage, utterly indifferent to all the excitement and bustle of the brilliant, pleasure-seeking crowd, passing, repassing, shifting, changing before her like the glittering colours in a kaleidoscope.

A milk-white steed and a coal-black one. How they arched their shining, full-veined necks, as they came prancing, mincing, daintily pacing up the promenade. Down to the saddle-bows bent the uncovered heads of the riders as the elegant equipage of "la belle Lee" dashed past them.

Guy Rivers' cheek flushed hotly; he looked as though he were breathing in an inspiration.

Thorndike Marston smiled at his rapt look.

"Come, now, confess that in all your travels you never met with anything half so fair. There will be no need of hunting the world over again. Behold the rarest of all earth's jewels here at home's portales. Isn't she magnificent, though?"

"But that's not the word."

"What then?"

"Exquisitely frail, divinely sensitive, touchingly mournful," he answered, breathlessly.

"Well, you always see things differently from anybody else. But how you can bring all those apostrophes to bear upon this great, white, creamy creature, with all that blonde hair tumbling into blinding, wind-blown masses about her face, is beyond my ken. All I can think of, when I look at her, is just full-blown water-lilies softly swaying with the slow ripple of the waves. On my faith, nothing but magnificence can suit."

"But can't you understand? I don't mean the blonde—the other one, who is she?"

"Not the blonde? Why, she's the reigning belle, my dear boy. It isn't possible you've had the bad taste to pass her by, to have eyes only for—that's too rich."

The slight, sarcastic laugh grated upon Guy's nerves. He spoke impatiently:

"Your mirth is ill-timed. I am in earnest."

"What! Can I believe my senses? The elegant, the fastidious, the unapproachable Guy Rivers, going down without an effort before the—indeed, I cannot go on."

"Softly, Thor, or the jest will turn into something more. Will you tell me who she is?"

"There, there, here you have it. The one adored—now I'll watch you wince—is handkerchief-carrier, waiter-in-general, a humble satellite and—"

"Thorndike Marston, have done, at your peril. Another word and you shall answer for it as for a deadly insult."

It came hoarsely through Guy's shut teeth. Thorndike Marston looked at him in amazement, and dropping his bantering tones, said, slowly:

"And am I, then, to believe that you are really and truly so interested in Miss Mabel Rogère? Why, she is considered as more dead than alive."

Guy Rivers flung back his tawny locks. They hung low on his neck like a lion's mane.

"I feel it; she is my fate, what I have been looking for all these years. I love her. I will have her, so help me heaven."

And he bent his head reverently, and no word more concerning her passed his lips.

A world of deep, unswerving resolve shone out of the steady, steel-blue eyes. Thorndike Marston noted it, bitterly. How should he work against that iron will?

Quick as lightning it flashed through him. It was with all his accustomed easy swiftness that he spoke.

"They say I am the favoured suitor of the peerless Idyl. As I have the *entrée* there at all hours, I may be of assistance to you."

Lounging on the piazza that night, Thorndike Marston planned it all out. If he stretched out his hand he could touch Guy, and there he sat so near to him, his friend, plotting evil against him.

Why should he? Mabel Rogère, Idyl Lee's paid companion, held over him a subtle charm.

Her cold indifference but fanned the flame. The world thought him a follower in Idyl's train; he encouraged the rumour. It kept him near the true and unconscious object of his worship, and prevented the decisive laugh that would be sure to attack him. The "Marston pride" had passed into a proverb. In the world's opinion this would be a *mésalliance*. Such a thought he knew would never enter Guy's head, and he felt that in him was a formidable rival, and so he plotted against him.

Guy was the soul of honour; one word would have been sufficient; but Thorndike Marston was not man enough to say it.

No, he had rather trail the venom of his hate over every fair blossom that Guy's love could foster. This was what he chose.

CHAPTER II.

THE AWAKENING

It was a perfect crush at the Lee's that night. The spacious, airy rooms, opening one into another, throughout the entire length of the house, were thrown open to the guests.

The long, dazzling vista was ablaze with light, radiant with gorgeous toilettes, alive with beauty's smile.

The rapturous waltz-music rose and fell in unison with flying feet and the hum of many voices, and in between came the sough of the restless sea, rolling the surf up against the shore.

Mabel liked to hear it, the ocean's grand, half-sobbing monotone. She stood leaning half way out of the low French window, listening intently, her hands clasped and drooping, as usual, but her eyes were dreamy and full of a delicious languor to-night. The old, weary, frozen hopelessness had died out of them, for a time, at least.

"Mabel!" She did not start nor turn, only half-smiled, as though the voice fitted into her dream.

"Mabel!" Guy Rivers stepped out upon the turf and daisies in front of her.

"Yes, Guy," answered she, still dreamily.

"Queen Mab, will you come to the shore with me?"

"Beware!" The whisper sounded in Mabel's ear like a serpent's hiss. She shuddered and stood still; then hurried through the thick shadows, impatient to reach the moonlight.

It was a perfect face she looked up into; every feature of it stood out, in the silvery light, in bold relief; a face to believe in.

"Do you know you always put me in mind of some timid bird, for ever dreading the fowler's snare? Why is it?"

"Guy, I think I never told you of my early life. Listen! I will tell you now."

Mabel stood as rigid and motionless as the rock she leaned against. Her white dress glistened coldly in the moonbeams, and the silvery spray, as it dashed up among the rocks at her feet, seemed to wrap her in a ghostly winding-sheet. Her words came short and quick; she spoke in French.

"I am a Parisienne. My father was a banker, and very rich, so they said. We had carriages and servants; we lived in the fashionable world. But my father died suddenly. He left nothing, we found, but debts. We sold the furniture, the plates, our own jewels. You see we could not bear to have anything cast against the dead. And we were destitute, my poor mother and I. It was sad, was it not, monsieur? But then such things are natural. Money takes to itself wings, and children should bury their parents. Then my mother died. This grieved me very sore. But still I had something to live for. I was so young, then, monsieur, and I believed in Alphonse. He was away when all this trouble came, but I had written him. He had been my betrothed from infancy. Every morning I said, 'He will surely come to-day,' and every night, 'I know he will be here to-morrow.' Finally, I had spent my last shilling. Hunger made me restless. I went out. Do you know I saw him in the street? I went up to him, although he was not alone. Joy had made me bold. He looked at me, and went on talking. I grasped his arm. 'Alphonse, it is I.' He paid no attention. 'Alphonse, do you not know me?' He shook off my hand. I was paralyzed. He laughed

scornfully. He said, 'Let me pass, my pretty beggar.'

"Oh, Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! Yes, monsieur, then my heart broke. No, it turned to stone. It killed me, but I still lived. I was sixteen then. I stood there where he left me. I was very still. I felt my face settling as I had watched my mother's after she was dead. Madame la Baronne drove up the Boulevards past me. She took me home. I didn't mind. I never thanked her. Then she brought me to Madame Lee. It made no difference. It was all the same to me.

"It is five years since then. I have been like a clod, I have been dead all that time."

Guy would not longer be silenced.

"Oh, dearest, wake! wake to happiness and me."

"No, let me be—let me stay as I am. The old way must be the best way. Nothing can trouble me now. If I wake, what surely have I that it will not be to a short-lived happiness, to blacker misery in the end?"

"You torture me," was wrung from Guy's lips. "Can you not feel that, with me, even the winds of heaven shall be kept from fanning your cheek too roughly?"

"Words, words! Have not I heard them before? How can I feel what is in your heart? Alphonse told me he loved me, but Alphonse was false. Strange that I ever cared. When I think of it now, it seems as though it was somebody else it happened to."

"Mabel, have pity on me, on yourself," Guy flung himself down despairingly. "Believe in me, trust in me. No danger but I will dare for you; no misery, disgrace, nor ruin, but I will share with you; no sacrifice that I will count too costly to lie at your feet."

"Monsieur, you compel me to it. Your words are very brave and fair; but, after all you have said, I have not faith enough to foretell how you would act if danger should come to me."

Guy's face was buried in his hands; he moaned as if in agony.

"Hush!" Mabel soothed him as she would a child. He caught her hand suddenly. It lay between his burning palms like a snowflake, as white, as cold, as frozen; and only the ocean-pulse beating time for them hoarsely.

Their eyes met. She made a motion to withdraw her hand. It fluttered and grew warm in his grasp. Snowflakes always melt when they are wooed by the sun.

All Guy's deathless love bounded into his eyes, surged over, and at last Mabel felt the resistless power of its rising tide, and once more lay engulfed in its living waters.

"You tremble and turn away. Tell me you will trust me."

"I cannot say," she cried, harshly. She could not accept, as yet, this sudden awakening. Then, a little calmer, "I must have time to think first."

"Oh, do not; there is no need."

Mabel interrupted him imperiously—"I say I will have time." Now her voice sank to its old mocking cadence. "You need the time, too. Who can tell but that by another tide your promise will be swept away? Look! We will make marks in the sand, and see which will last the longer."

"Now, hear me swear by all—"

"Monsieur, you forget yourself. We will act like children no longer. Think it over well. Remember, this is a bold venture, for you as well as me. My nature is already cold and misshapen; a second trial would goad it to desperation. Then, to-morrow, if you still care, and if you dare come to me—"

"Dare? Oh, my beloved, all things will I dare for such a boon."

The black rocks rose up frowning behind them, ledge above ledge, and at the base huge boulders threw threatening shadows to their very feet. It looked ill-omened.

It struck Mabel so, and her sight seemed to waver and grow unsteady, or else it was a shadow highest them that moved as she gazed searching into its depths. The fancy clung to her all the way back to the house.

They parted at the open casement, he bowing low over her hand and murmuring "To-morrow, remember! Oh, Queen Mab, never fear but I will dare."

CHAPTER III.

DRIFTING.

MABEL moved forward, slowly threading her way through the crowded room towards Idyl Lee. She found her, as usual, the centre of a thronging crowd, eager to pay homage to the queen of the *élite*. She sat superb in her voluptuous beauty. Diaphanous waves of pale sea-green aerophane swayed and swung about her. Her priceless *parure* of shells enhanced the mellow splendour of her neck and arms. Delicate, vibrating sea-mosses, the tiny shells still clinging to

them, hung from the bronze coils that crowned her transcendent beauty.

Idyl Lee, glared, as well she might, in her intoxicating power. But could that be Mademoiselle Rogé standing by her chair? No wonder people looked at her in astonishment that night. The wildly-bewitching eyes gleamed like twin stars at midnight from under the jetty blackness of her drooping lashes, and the tremulous quiver of the little mouth gave a new beauty to the delicate face, whose pure whiteness strongly contrasted with the masses of her blue-black hair, that, under the glaring lights, flashed back in purplish lustre. The rosy mantle of love was spread over her; it flushed her cheek with the rare tint a child's face sometimes wears on first awakening from drowsy slumbers. Thorndike Marston knew the meaning of this more than earthly beauty, and cursed his folly. The prize was slipping through his fingers, after all. Oh, the pride that had held him back! If he had only—but where was the use of thinking of that? he wouldn't give up yet. How he watched Mabel. She fascinated him. The courtly grace and bearing she had learned long ago in the drawing-rooms of the ancient nobility served her in good stead now. She took them all by storm. She was the idol of the hour.

Thorndike Marston could have thrown himself at her feet and worshipped her there before the whole world. But it was too late for that now.

"You are angelically beautiful to-night. Is it because you are happy?"

"Ah!"—with a sigh—"if it could only last." They were separated from the crowd. He had manoeuvred to bring it about. "If it could only last. I thought you my friend; why do you seek to sadden me, and bring me back to my old self?"

"Dear Mabel! let me call you so. I can read your face so plainly. 'Tis the Arabian Nights over again. The enchanted prince has come, and the sleeping beauty has awakened; and so I say, 'If it could only last.'"

"Monsieur, I do not comprehend. He is your friend, is he not?"

"Poor child! and so many times, too, I have warned you. Yes, he is my friend, but, alas for the woman, be she who she may, who gives her troth to him."

"Enough; I will hear no more."

"Nay, do not look so disdainfully at me. It wrings my soul to tell you this. Can you not guess why I do it?"

"I am entirely at a loss."

"Because I love you! Why do you start? I know it is hopeless. I shall never trouble you with my love. I shall bear my cross in silence to the grave. I am content if I may but be your friend." How mournfully subdued and heart-broken he looked. "Will you not hear me now?"

Mabel's cheek glowed hotly, but she shuddered as she wrapped her cloak closer about her.

"I tell you he plays with women's hearts as gamblers play with cards. He measures his victim, and the harder and more difficult the game becomes, the more eager he is in his pursuit, and when it is won—"

"But what if it isn't won?"

The pallor of Mabel's face was "frightful as she leaned forward."

"It is his boast that no woman ever resisted him. I could tell you, so well do I know his character, almost word for word what he has said to-night. He has been wildly entreating, passionately pleading, ready to swear to his truth and honour, and brave and heroic to save you from imaginary dangers. Is it not so?—Yes? Pshaw! then he has drawn you along with a thrice-told tale."

Marble-like was the form at his side.

"What will you do?" he asked.

"I think your friend will lose his game just this once. He shall be checkmated." Her words were hard and pitiless. Thorndike felt the joy of a demon. Her jealous mistrust had been easy to work upon. "But I will have revenge for this. He shall bite the dust. Through my hands shall he taste the bitterness he has meted out to me." She had become desperate. Now was his time. She was but a reed in his hands.

"Shall I help you to a sure way?"

"Will you? A sure way to get revenge! revenge!" She gloated over the words.

"Yes; but perhaps you will not try it."

"I will, be it what it may. Quick, what is it?"

"You will acquire at once riches and supreme power. Without these you could never touch Guy Rivers. You have only to be my wife."

He had made his last throw.

He waited with suppressed breath for the answer.

"I—will—do—it!"—low and steady. But it was too much; she broke down after it. "He said he would dare everything for me. He looked so true. Can I not put him to some test?"

"Poor, storm-beaten blossom, trust it all to me."

He had won, and the world's laugh dwindled into a very nothing in view of the peril he had so successfully weathered.

CHAPTER IV.

SAVED.

GUY RIVERS smoked his cigar so lazily the next morning that when he reached the beach the surf was already dotted thickly with the bizarre costumes of the bathers.

A merry, motley, oriental-looking crew, diving, splashing, swimming, floating. The silver grey, with the scarlet facings—that was the only one he cared to see of them all. He looked for it amongst the crowd. He could have picked it out from a million.

"Eyes for but one, as usual, Guy." It was Thorndike Marston.

"Look, Thor. Don't you see her off there by herself? What is she doing alone, so far away from the others?"

"Now don't be in such a hurry to get over to her. Such an adept as she is safe enough, surely" was answered, with seeming carelessness. "By the way, here is something she commissioned me with me."

Guy Rivers opened the tiny scrap of paper.

"After bathing.—MABEL."

That was all. He thought a minute. "I will go up to the house and wait for her," he said.

Thorndike Marston's scheme was working well.

Guy gave one backward glance as he stepped from the water. Then, all at once, rose a murmur; then a shriek, a universal cry of terror.

"The quicksands! the quicksands!"

Thorndike Marston looked quickly. Mabel was over the fatal spot.

"Sooth!" he muttered. "Has the girl out-witted me, or was it accident?"

He measured the distance with his eye, hesitated, and drew back. "She will be lost, at any rate, and—I dare not."

He ground his teeth in rage, and watched Guy Rivers' swift steady strokes, as he dashed toward her. The waves parted right and left before the nervous energy of his sinewy arm like magic. This last little scene was not exactly what Thorndike Marston had arranged that morning with Mabel. She had listened quietly to his scheme.

"You are to tell him so," he said.

"But I am not really to swim over the quicksands, then?" she had asked.

"Can you imagine it for a moment? It would be almost certain death. The test is not worthy so great a risk. Indeed, there is no use of trying it at all. I am certain of the end."

The tone might have seemed, to a 'close observer, somewhat over-confident. He was so near and so sure—that made Mabel think of the moving shadow just then.

"If he comes to me through the danger—"

"But there will be no danger."

"What he thinks danger?"

"I shall have been mistaken. If it is I that am false, I will yield you up to him. Are you content?"

It might have been a suspicion of treachery that caused her to take the opposite and fatal direction, or perhaps it was accident.

"Baffled!"

He ground his teeth in rage at the thought, and his face grew distorted like a madman's.

It had been a real test for both. This was the result. Mabel's strength was well nigh gone when Guy Rivers reached her. She would never have had strength to stem the rapid current that set in against the cliff that hemmed in, on one side, the dreaded quicksands. She clung closer to him as her strength gave way. Guy felt within him the power of a giant. He held her tightly, buffeting the waves with one hand, as he moved swiftly from the deadly spot. Up on the sand he carried her, and sank exhausted by her side.

"My darling," he whispered, as she gazed at him wistfully, "did you think I wouldn't dare to come to you?"

She smiled up at him.

"Saved!"

The word told volumes. Saved from death; ay, more than death. With the word on her lips she fainted.

B. B.

further addition to the family, and at once put a young rabbit in puss' bosom. This cat seems to be endowed with an extraordinary amount of maternal milk of feline kindness, for she has hailed the advent of the rabbit with every show of affection, and ever since the "happy family" has lived together on terms of unexampled pleasantness.

A WEALTHY old man, who died at Stratford recently, in letting his houses always insisted on the following conditions:—1st, "There must be no children;" 2nd, "The tenant must not smoke;" 3rd, "Nor keep birds;" 4th, "Nor exhibit flowers in pots or otherwise in any or either of the windows of the house;" 5th, "If a bachelor, or widow, or spinster, he or she must not enter into matrimony during his or her tenancy."

ATTACHMENTS OF THE HEART.

So difficult is it to eradicate in old age the attachments of the heart which we imbibe in our youth, that whatever we are taught, or happen of ourselves to like or dislike, we for the most part continue to admire or despise to the end of our lives.

The attachments of the heart, on which almost all the happiness or misery of life depends, are the most interesting objects of our consideration. I shall respectfully offer to the fair readers of THE LONDON READER many of the observations which I have gleaned from deep researches into the every-day occurrences through the paths of human life.

The earliest impressions stamped on juvenile hearts are those formed by tender friendship, which kindles into love, and which are considered, as I have before observed, the noblest and most happy of affections, when built on a solid foundation, but too frequently ill-suited and frequently misunderstood. Their first error is that of supposing equality of age, and exact similarity of disposition, indispensably requisite in friends, whereas these are circumstances which, in a great measure, disqualify them for assisting each other's defects; they expose them to the same dangers, and incline them to encourage, rather than correct, each other's failing. The grand cement of this kind of friendship is telling secrets, which they call confidence, and I verily believe that the desire of having secrets to tell has often helped to draw silly girls into very unhappy adventures.

If they have nothing of greater moment to talk of (love, for instance) the too frequent subject of their confidence is betraying the secrets of their families, or conjuring up fancied hardships to complain of against their parents or relations. This odious cabal they call friendship, and fancy themselves dignified by the profession; but nothing is more different from the reality, as is seen by observing how generally those early friendships drop off as the parties advance in years and understanding.

Let me therefore advise, be not too ready to profess a friendship with young companions. Love them, and be always ready to serve and oblige them, but be careful how you enter into confidence with young ladies of a similar age. Rather choose some one of ripe years and judgment, whose good nature and worthy principles may assure you of candour and confidence. I do not mean that youth should delight to associate with age, but with such as are capable of giving good advice and improving the mind. Such are the beauties of the heart's attachments.

J. A.

EVA ASHLEY.

CHAPTER XXI.

LEON'S GAME OF VILLAINY GOES ON.

THE next two months passed as an idyl to the enamoured lover; he forgot his years, the dignity of his station, and gave himself up to the intoxicating belief that this young and beautiful woman was becoming attached to him for himself alone.

He sought to gratify every caprice she might have; but his Daisy, as he chose to call her, was very careful to ask nothing which could lower his self-respect, or induce him to consider her as too exacting.

Full of life and vivacity herself, she seemed to infuse her own nature into that of the sombre dignitary whose sternness had so lately caused him to sit in judgment on his own son. She sang to him, striking with skilful fingers the chords of lively nonsense; to which he listened with fond rapture; and for the first time since the cares of life settled upon him, Squire Ashley felt as if existence was not intended to become a mere round of duties, divested of all agreeable recreation—all lightness of heart. The joyousness of his new idol's nature was rapidly counteracting the sombre tendency of his own, and he was a better and a happier man for the change.

The two months passed away on wings of light to him, and at their close Mrs. Wilde still petitioned for a little longer delay. She seemed to shrink from the final settlement of her destiny, equivocal as her position had now become in Squire Ashley's house. The servants had long since discovered what was going on, and friends at a distance had heard of a young woman, occupying almost a menial position in his family, to whom he was devoting himself, and they wrote to remonstrate with him, as strongly as they dared.

The squire treated them with silent contempt; but his adored Margaret, for whose sake he was bearing all this annoyance, tantalized and worried him, almost beyond endurance, by insisting, with tears, that he would grant her the delay of another month before their union took place.

Squire Ashley granted her prayer, for he could refuse her nothing; but he was determined this delay should be the last.

When the close of the month approached, he made a visit to the county town, and returned to Ashurst, accompanied by a young minister, whom he had engaged to marry him.

He had the license in his pocket, and he walked into Mrs. Wilde's room, followed by the stranger, and curtly said:

"Margaret, I have brought this gentleman hither to unite us in the holy bonds of matrimony. I have the license, and will no longer put off; the wedding shall take place now or never."

Mrs. Wilde had started forward to greet him on his entrance, but she now shrank back, and sank upon a seat, trembling, and pale as death.

The squire bent over her, and whispered:

"What is it, love? What alarms you so?"

"Nothing, nothing; I am better now," was the faint reply. "Since you will have it so, I suppose there is no alternative but to obey you."

After a few moments of intense agitation, Mrs. Wilde recovered apparent composure. She allowed Squire Ashley to take her cold hand in his own, and lead her before the surprised clergyman, who had never before officiated at so singular and unceremonious a marriage.

Winny and Janet were the only witnesses, though neither of them could believe that their master intended really to marry the nurse of Bessie, till they heard the words actually said which made her his wife.

The ceremony was ended. Squire Ashley clasped his bride to his heart, on which she fainted dead away.

Such was the effect produced by the consummation of all the wiles she had practised to bring about this very result.

If Grace Arden had ever imagined that being doubly wedded to Leon Ashley would render her doubly dear to her husband, she was destined to be soon and bitterly undeceived.

She suffered terribly from sea-sickness on their voyage, and Ashley left her to the care of her maid, while he amused himself with flirting with such lady passengers as were not subject to *la maladie de mer*.

When he did tear himself from his own pastimes, and found time to enter her state-room, he uttered the tenderest protestations of sympathy, and made her believe that he would never leave her side if the closeness of the cabin did not overcome him.

Grace was well satisfied that he should absent himself, for the peculiarity of sea-sickness is, that it renders one indifferent to everything, and the newly-wedded wife sensibly adjourned all display of sentiment till they reached *terra firma* again.

The voyage was at last ended, and Ashley thought that something was due to her who had so generously trusted him.

He believed that he should acquit himself creditably of the debt he owed her if he made her happy for one little honeymoon.

So he took a picturesque villa near Marseilles, which overlooked the Mediterranean, and set up a small but complete household in it.

Grace took possession of "Love's first home," and there, for a few blissful weeks, she forgot all her previous sufferings, was oblivious of all her adored Leon had done to destroy her confidence in him.

She loved him as only a weak and tender woman can surrender herself to a man she cannot esteem, though she may feel for him the most passionate affection.

During a few weeks of that delicious autumn, the pale eyes of Grace gained fire, the wasted cheeks roundness and bloom, and the light of perfect content shone upon the brow of the newly made wife.

Her adored Leon was devoted to her, and what more could she ask of fate. But gradually her Eden was invaded by visitors from the neighbouring city. Ashley spoke French perfectly, and he had managed

to form many acquaintances since he landed in France, all of them men of his own calibre.

Gay, reckless young cavaliers came to their secluded and beautiful home, they filled the house with carousing, and detained the master of the establishment night after night at the gambling-table. Grace reluctantly remonstrated, for she detested the part of a scolding and discontented wife. Ashley listened good humouredly, and promised amendment, but he evaded keeping his word, and at last pretending to be wearied with his fruitless attempts to rid himself of his companions, he proposed giving up their establishment and removing to Paris. Grace joyfully consented, for she believed that if her husband were once removed from his dissipated associates, his habits would change, and he would again be to her the tender and considerate companion he had been on their first arrival in France. But she too soon had cause to know that the fault was not in the friends he had chosen as much as in himself. They were no sooner established in handsome apartments in Paris, than she found him lured from her side by the same pursuits which had occupied him in their country home. Ashley did not now incommoded her with the presence of his reckless associates under his own roof, but he spent night after night at the gaming saloons of the *Palais Royal*. The time spent in his own lodging was chiefly consumed in sleeping and eating, and Grace found herself that most forlorn of beings, a neglected wife in the midst of a strange city, surrounded by people with whose language she was imperfectly acquainted.

Her English maid had left her to marry a French hairdresser, and the unhappy wife had no human being near her to whom she could intelligibly speak. Ashley sneered at her because she did not acquire the language she heard spoken every day, but her ear was not quick, nor her intellect bright, and try as she would she found it impossible to remember more than was actually necessary for the common purposes of life.

The deepest despondency settled on Mrs. Ashley's spirits; she discovered the correspondence which was carried on between her adored Leon and Augusta Maitland, and although she dreamed not of the extent of his turpitude, the knowledge that her husband took sufficient interest in Miss Maitland to keep up intercourse by letter with her gave a severe shock to the bursting heart of the devoted wife. She also found that Ashley's temper was a terrible one to contend with; even if he had loved her he would scarcely have put a restraint upon it, but feeling her a clog upon his path, loving another with such love as he was capable of feeling, poor Grace could do nothing that was pleasant in his eyes. If she tried to welcome him with a smile when he returned from his orgies, he turned away with a sneer, and made some cutting remark on her want of personal charms; if she wept he stormed and raved at her, telling her it was no wonder he stayed so much from his own home since nothing greeted him there but ill-temper.

As time passed on, the slight aberration of mind which had been observable before her marriage became a confirmed mania, and when a daughter was given to her before the close of the first year of married life, the unfortunate mother was in no condition to prize the blessing, which under more favourable circumstances might have given a new interest to her wrecked life.

A severe fever confined her to her bed for many weeks, and when her bodily health seemed to be restored, the long-suffering mind had sunk into a kind of apathetic idiocy.

Even the sight of her child could not arouse in her any expression of interest, and the infant was removed from her lest she should do it some injury.

By a strange caprice, Ashley chose to call his child Evelyn, after the Eva he had so basely deserted, and the little girl was baptized Evelyn Arden Larne.

She was placed under the care of a healthy nurse, and her father watched over her with extreme solicitude.

She was the heiress of the Arden estates, and therefore of importance to him, for he had exacted from his lunatic wife a settlement on himself of the income derived from her property until her child attained her twenty-first year.

Ashley's next step was to obtain from three physicians a certificate of the incurable madness of his wife.

Armed with this, he went before the tribunals, and demanded that his marriage should be set aside.

As he declared his intention to become a citizen of France, there was no legal flaw in the divorce he obtained, and the shameful programme laid out by the unprincipled lovers was now ready to be carried out.

Ashley wrote to Augusta Maitland that his encumbrance was in no condition to combat any disposition he might choose to make of her, and so soon as he had placed her in a private lunatic asylum, he would fly on the wings of love to claim his adored one.

As if to remove every obstacle in their path, Mrs. Maitland died suddenly about a year after Ashley's departure for the Continent, leaving Augusta the possessor of a small fortune, and perfect independence of action.

When the letter of her lover reached her hands, she made instant preparations to meet him in Boulogne as he was afraid to trust himself upon his native soil again. Ashley required her to show her trust in him by meeting him alone at the appointed place.

Attended only by a waiting-maid she hired in London, Miss Maitland found robes already engaged for her, and before she had time to take possession of them and remove her bonnet, she was clasped in Ashley's arms.

Arrangements were speedily made for an immediate union, and in two hours after her arrival, they were united.

After a brief sojourn in Boulogne, the bridal pair took up their residence in Paris.

Ashley had made no attempt to introduce poor Grace into society, she was not attractive enough to gratify his pride, but with the brilliant and beautiful Augusta it was far different.

He was proud to display his new charmer to the gay world in which he had gained a footing for himself, and to his great delight, he found that in their two years of separation, Augusta had so diligently applied herself to the acquisition of the French language, that she could speak it with ease and elegance.

In the gay whirl of fashion and pleasure, Augusta gained friends and admirers wherever she appeared, and Ashley bowed in homage before the idol of the hour, and gave her all the heart he possessed.

He surrounded her with luxury, lavished on her everything that could gratify her pride, or increase the prestige of her beauty, careless that the means of doing this were chiefly drawn from the resources of the discarded Grace.

In reply to the last letter Grace had written to Judge Ashley informing him of her resolution to cling to his son through good and evil report, he had returned a few brief lines, which reached her through her husband's banker.

In these the squire expressed his fears for the result of what she had ventured to do in spite of all his warnings; but he accepted the agency of her estates, and through him a large sum was annually transmitted to Leon Larne's credit.

In addition to these, Squire Ashley allowed his recreant son a liberal annuity, and Leon possessed the means to revel in splendour on the fortune the hapless Grace was incapable of enjoying.

Incarcerated in a *maison de santé*, surrounded by extensive and beautiful grounds, furnished with everything that was essential to her comfort, Ashley thought he had done everything for Grace that could be required of him, and beyond paying her bills as they fell due, he no longer troubled himself about her.

From his father he carefully concealed the condition of Grace, and also his subsequent proceedings.

He suffered Squire Ashley to believe that the dear wife he referred to in the few brief epistles he addressed to him was herself.

He made Augusta contribute to the deception by adding brief postscripts to his letters in the feeble, lady-like hand of her predecessor, and there was little chance that Squire Ashley, in his far-away home, should discover that another occupied the position of the forsaken Grace and enjoyed her fortune.

The existence of the child was duly communicated to her grandfather, and the burden of Augusta's postscripts was praises of her baby, as she called the pale, puny little being who had inherited all her mother's delicacy of constitution, with much of her father's beauty of person.

The heiress of the Arden estates was too important a personage to be neglected, and in the luxurious home of her father a suite of apartments and two attendants were appropriated to the use of the little girl.

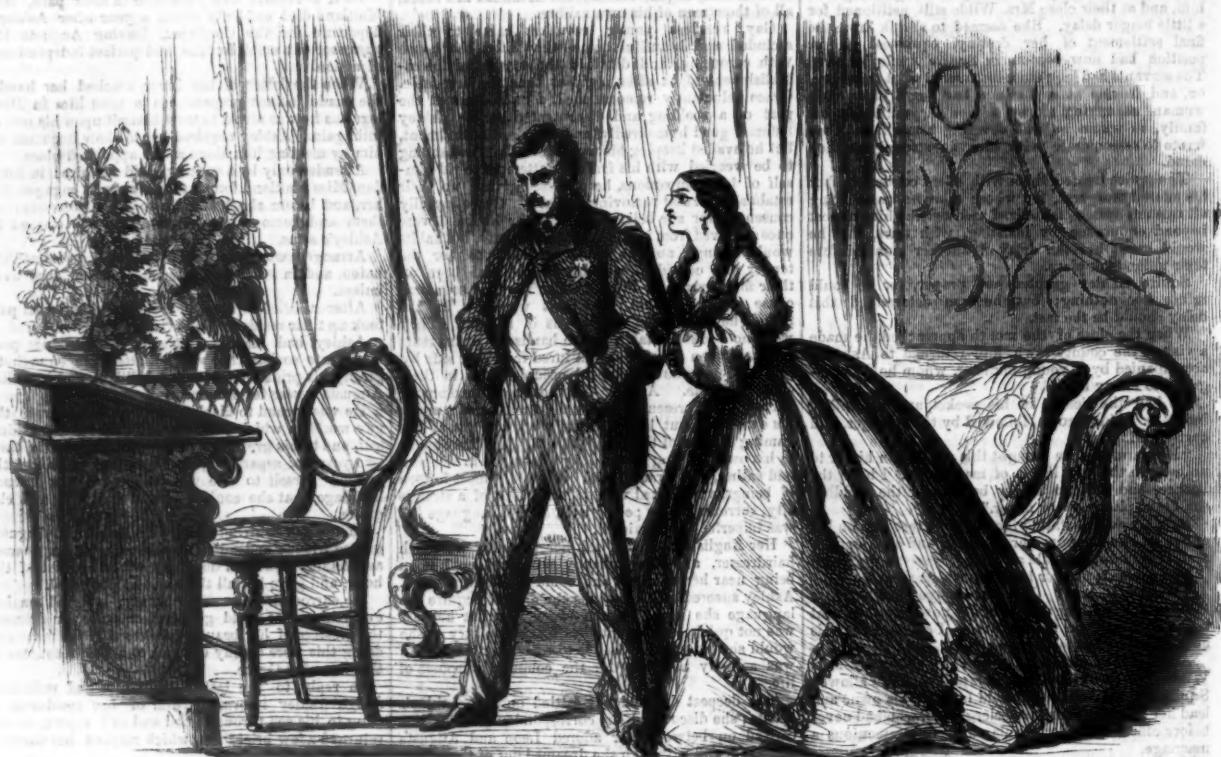
But with all the attentions lavished on her the child did not thrive, and with extreme difficulty was life kept in her frail form till the close of the second year. She then became so ill that the physician advised her removal to the country, as the only means of saving her life.

Her father, in great agitation, sought an interview with her principal medical attendant, and insisted that his real opinion as to the ultimate chances of life or death for the delicate little creature should be expressed.

Thus pressed, the physician said:

"Your daughter has no constitution, monsieur. It is a wonder to me that she has lived this long, and but for my skill she would have been in her grave long ago. I am sorry to afflict you, but this little one will never reach maturity."

"That is not what I am asking you, doctor. Will the child get through now, and if not, how long do you suppose she may live? It is of vital importance



[LEON ANTICIPATED A REVERSE OF FORTUNE.]

to my interests to have the last question frankly answered."

"Frankly, then, I have no idea that she will be alive a month hence, and if you have any property arrangements to make that may be contingent on her death, I advise you to attend to them without delay, for the child may not last even that long."

Ashley's face became livid, and with difficulty he commanded himself sufficiently to thank the speaker for his candour.

The physician gave him credit for being a most tender parent, when in reality the child was herself of the least possible consequence to him; he only valued her so far as his own interests were bound up with the continuation of her life.

Though his father was ignorant of his second marriage, all Ashley's foreign friends, and a few of his own countrymen residing in Paris, were well aware of it; and if this child perished, his hold on the Arden estates must die with her.

The next heir to them was a needy and extravagant man, who would lose no time in claiming his rich inheritance; and among Ashley's acquaintance was a friend of James Arden, who would notify him of the decease of the heiress.

With this dread hanging over him, Ashley sought the boudoir of his wife.

The room was fitted up with exquisite taste, and it was crowded with articles of luxury which the expensive whims of Augusta led her to purchase.

She was lounging over a new novel: but she threw it aside with sparkling eyes and smiling lips to welcome him on his entrance; for with that fatal power of persuasion Ashley possessed for women, Augusta was as completely his slave as the unfortunate Grace had been.

She observed the state of perturbation in which he was, and softly asked:

"What is it, love? Has anything happened to disturb you? Evelyn is no worse, for I was in her room not long ago, and I left her sleeping calmly."

"Yes, she sleeps calmly enough, I dare say, but that does not alter the decree which says that her slumbers will soon be endless. Dr. Lemoine says that her days are numbered, and if Evelyn dies, we lose with her all the luxury that surrounds us. The allowance I receive from my father will barely enable us to live respectably; your fortune is a mere trifling, and the large income I derive from the Arden estates supplies us with every luxury by which we are surrounded."

Augusta slightly changed colour, but she hopefully replied:

"I know how important the life of the child is to us, but if care can save her she will live. Physicians are not always to be relied on in their judgments of the ailments of children. Since Evelyn has been so ill, I have deprived myself of every pleasure to see that she is properly attended to. What can I do more, dear Leon, and why should you look so desperate about her condition?"

For the first time since her marriage he replied to her angrily:

"Because it is desperate. Dr. Lemoine has just told me that it is impossible for her to live another month, and in spite of your mistrust of his opinion, I believe him. We have that brief time to consider what shall be done to save ourselves from the consequences of her death, and to act for our own interests."

"What can you mean?" asked Augusta, in bewilderment. "What can we do to avert the consequences you foresee? I am sure that I shall be quite ready to assist you to the best of my ability."

"I have never doubted that; but you are singularly obtuse for so sharp a woman as you are, Augusta. Can you not divine what must be done to save us from poverty?"

"I suppose I must be duller than you thought me, for I do not in the least understand you."

Ashley arose, glanced into the adjoining room to see that no listening ears were near, and then stooping over his wife, he whispered:

"We must find another child to take her place, and personate the heiress of the estate I am resolved to retain possession of."

Augusta started, and shivered; she hurriedly replied, in the same tone:

"How can that be done with safety to ourselves? If the fraud were detected, we should both be ruined and disgraced."

"Pooh! it shall not be detected," he firmly replied. "Why should it be? We will remove far from this city, seek and find a child near the same age, and substitute her for the puny creature who has given us so much trouble."

"But how to accomplish it without the knowledge of the servants?" objected Augusta, whose heart was filled with dread as to the future results to herself and her husband if the crime should chance to be detected.

Ashley impatiently replied:

"We will discharge them all except the Englishwoman who has been engaged as nurse to Evelyn. I have remarked her particularly, for I have feared for some time that such a contingency might arise. She is poor and avaricious, I am certain, and for a

consideration she will aid me in accomplishing what must be done, and conceal the exchange we are forced to make. It will be no concern of Jane's, and a destitute child will be brilliantly provided for."

Augusta made no reply, and Ashley asked in an irritated tone:

"You do not object, I hope, madam."

There was something in his voice that startled her, and she shivered as the conviction came to her that even if she dared to object to his plan, her opposition would be crushed down as ruthlessly as that of the most indifferent person who offered to oppose his will. She hastened to say:

"I am startled, love, by the sudden emergency that has arisen, but you are quite right, as you always are. If the poor child is doomed, we must provide for our own safety by finding another to take her place. It will be wronging no one, for you have the best right to the fortune you sacrificed a year of your life to obtain."

He kissed her, and smilingly said:

"Now you talk like a sensible woman, and I see that you will go heart and soul with me in carrying out the measures that are necessary to self-preservation."

He paused, and his wife asked:

"Where are we to find a child, Leon? Will you seek for one in a public asylum?"

"No, no, that would not do. We would be compelled to give our names and residence, and go through numerous formalities before we gain possession of an *esfant troué*. The nurse, as I said before, will be our surest reliance for help in this strait. I have heard her speak of a sister of hers living somewhere near Paris, who takes children to nurses. We may find one with her that will answer our purpose."

"Perhaps so; but I dread the thought of putting ourselves so much in Jane's power. Who knows what use she may make of it?"

"Pooh—don't be foolish, Augusta. Money will induce Jane to serve us, and money will bribe her to hold her tongue. I am sure we shall gain enough by this operation to pay her well."

Augusta made an effort to smile as she replied:

"I will try and be wise, Leon; but pray—pray don't call me such a coarse name again. It wounds me deeply—indeed it does."

"Don't vex me, then, by objections to anything I may find it necessary to do. There—don't begin to cry and spoil your eyes—you are a beautiful woman still, but no longer an angel, so you must allow me to be a little rude sometimes."

(To be continued.)



[A FATAL ACCIDENT.]

SIR JOHN.

BY MRS. LEON LEWIS.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The other shape, if shape it might be called that shape had none, Distinguishable in member, joint or limb, Or substance might be called that shadow seemed, For each seemed either. *Milton.*

SLIGHT AS was the noise made by his entrance, it was enough to arouse both Ralph and Blanche, who stared at the intruder with wild countenances.

Blanche's first idea was that she beheld an apparition, and she fairly covered in her seat.

Ralph was stunned and bewildered, not knowing what to think.

He had firmly believed his father to be dead and buried in the family vault, and the idea now flitted through his mind that his father's spirit perhaps angry at the offer of marriage he had been about to make to Blanche, to the total disregard of Amber, had appeared to him to testify his disapprobation.

But that thought simply darted through his mind. It found no lodgment there.

As he stared at the intruder, a warm smile flickered over the haggard face of the baronet and his arms unfolded to embrace his son.

As he saw this, Ralph sprang from his chair, crying:

"Father! Father!"

The next moment he was folded to his father's heart and a father's kisses were pressed upon his bearded lips, kisses which he returned with a passionate fervour known only to those who have welcomed home a loved one who has been thought dead.

"My son! My son!" exclaimed Sir John. "Thank God I behold you again!"

"And you are really alive, father?" cried Ralph, lifting his head to look into his father's face. "Why, we all supposed you dead! We have buried someone who seemed to be you!"

"I know it, my son! You buried the body of your uncle William!"

"How strange!" ejaculated Ralph, his astonishment increasing, and leading the baronet tenderly to a sofa. "Where have you been all these months, dear father? Why have you allowed us to think you dead? It seems as though you had risen from the grave!"

"To rob you of your honours, my son?" said Sir John, with a smile.

"Oh, father, Heaven knows it was a sad moment for me when I put them on!" exclaimed Ralph. "I

would rather never have a title and wealth than gain them by the terrible sacrifice of your death! Welcome, ten thousand welcomes home, father!"

"Alas!" said the baronet, "the great joy of this moment is terribly marred to me, my son! Another voice as dear to me as yours is not raised to welcome me! I left Amber to your care, and now ask her at your hands!"

"I know not where she is, father. Indeed, I have not knowingly failed in my duty towards Amber. I will explain all as soon as you are rested, father!"

Sir John's stern countenance relaxed a little as he listened to his son's earnest self-defence.

"But tell me, father," said Ralph, "where have you been all these weary months? Why have you not, at least, written to us?"

"Because I have spent all this time in a robber's cave in a state of unconsciousness, Ralph. The year and more of my absence has been to me a blank!"

Ralph uttered a cry of horror.

The baronet explained how he came to be taken captive and how he came to be restored to reason.

As Blanche listened, she realised that it was no apparition she beheld, but the real and living Sir John, and she availed herself of a pause in the narrative to come forward and exclaim:

"Then it is you—and alive, dear Sir John! Let me add my welcome to Ralph's! I am so glad to see you!"

The baronet bowed, but did not avail himself of her proffered hand.

He could not press in amity the hand that had driven Amber from her home.

"Why, father," said Ralph, in surprise, "do you not see that Blanche desires to shake hands with you?"

"Tell me, my son," replied his father, "have I turned in time to break off your marriage with Blanche? You must give her up, if it breaks your heart."

"I am not engaged to marry Blanche, and I love her only as a brother regards a sister. But what do you mean, father?"

"I mean that this unhappy woman is already married! I have seen her husband—heard the whole story from his lips! He is the infamous Il Diavolo!"

Blanche uttered a low shriek and sank back into a chair.

"Can this be possible?" ejaculated Ralph, remembering his recent interview with Blanche.

"It is! The brigand's real name is Clonville! He begged me to intercede for him with his wife, whom he still loves, and freed me that I might do so!"

Blanche shivered and moaned.

That was a terrible moment to her erring soul! In the very moment she had expected to triumph had come her downfall!

The baronet related his interview with the robber-chief, and added:

"Blanche, it was you who with false and cruel words, drove Amber from her home, telling her that Ralph regarded her as a sordid dependant—it was you who sent her out upon a harsh and cruel world to earn her bread!"

"Oh, father, are you not mistaken?" cried Ralph.

"No. I have heard all this and more. For confirmation, you have only to look at Blanche!"

Blanche's countenance did indeed confirm the statement. The mask of hypocrisy had fallen from her fair, but deceitful visage. She could no longer keep up her show of self-possession, and her every emotion was plainly evinced. The rage and humiliation she experienced on listening to the revelation of her baseness almost banished the beauty from her face, and to her companions it looked worse than repulsive.

The baronet told, in language that came from his heart, the story of Amber's wrongs, and then, for the first time, Ralph did full and ample justice to the delicacy, modesty, and other womanly attributes of the noble girl whose love he had rejected.

The scales had fallen from his eyes at last.

"Your husband will follow me soon, Blanche," concluded the baronet. "He may be here to-morrow. I have promised him to say nothing against him to you, and to mention in his favour the release of myself and the two French surgeons. I made this promise, knowing that you were of woman's age and competent to decide for yourself. Do as you choose in the matter, but reflect carefully before you make your choice. I shall not advise you, knowing well that any advice I might give would be rejected. If you decide on remaining apart from your husband, you shall have a small annuity for your support. But I cannot have you in my house. Amber's place can never be occupied by you!"

"I don't wish to stay!" returned Blanche, her features distorted by passion. "I shall stay till Clonville comes, although I don't know whether I shall go with him or not. It's a pity, however, that you did not remain unconscious a week longer. You might have returned to find me Lady Courtney!"

Ralph shuddered.

Noticing his involuntary movement, Blanche smiled sardonically, and swept from the apartment, leaving father and son alone.

"Thank God, father, you came as you did!" murmured Ralph, pressing his father's hand affectionately. "I was on the point of making her an offer of marriage, she having intimated that she expected it! How deceived we have all been in her! Until now," he added, "I have never appreciated Amber as she deserved! Noble, long-suffering, gentle girl, she deserved a better fate!"

"But you did not love Blanche at all?"

"Not the least, father!"

"And you love no one?"

"Yes, father. I do love, but hopelessly. I love a Miss Vale, whom I have seen but once, but whom I regard as my twin spirit. But she is engaged to a gentleman in Australia, so I have no hope!"

"Then, if we can find Amber, Ralph, you will marry her?"

"Alas, father!" said Ralph, "when I spoke of Amber as being so noble and good, I alluded to her as she was—not as she is!"

The baronet was agitated by this remark, and eagerly demanded an explanation.

Ralph related how he had discovered that Amber had found a situation as governess in the family of Lady Moreland, and how she had disappeared from her home, to re-appear again after a few days of absence.

"Those days, father, were spent in the country with a fellow who cared only for her ruin, and when that was accomplished, he threw her aside—"

"Who says so?" interrupted Sir John, excitedly.

"The Morelands."

"They shall eat their words! It is false! Amber, if alive, is as pure to-day as when I left her. Do you suppose I do not know the child I reared? If an angel were to swear to this story, I should give him the lie!"

His wild earnestness of manner produced their effect upon his son, who said:

"Can it be possible that we are all mistaken, father? Blair Moreland asserts the truth of what I have said—"

"And who is Blair Moreland?"

"The son of Lord and Lady Moreland. He fell in love with Amber, and she rejected him—"

"Ah, there you have the truth in a nutshell! He had an object in defaming Amber. Very likely he carried her off, and told that lie to screen himself from the consequences of his action. I would believe anything sooner than ill of Amber. When did all this take place?"

Ralph gave the dates.

"So lately? Then we have some chances of finding the dear girl. Have you searched for her?"

Ralph replied in the affirmative, giving a brief description of his efforts to find Amber, and concluded:

"To-morrow, dear father, we will unite in an extended search for Amber. But now you need food and rest. Remember, if you do not recruit your strength, you can do nothing."

At this juncture dinner was announced, and Ralph, drawing his father's arm within his own, and tenderly supporting his wearied form, led him to the dining-room, passing on the way Robinson, who seemed astounded on hearing the stranger called by his master "father."

In the dining-room the baronet met Mrs. George, who received him as one from the grave; and after dinner he summoned his old servants to the hall, and made known his presence, receiving their heartfelt gratulations.

At an early hour he retired, to gather strength for the proposed search of the morrow.

CHAPTER XL

If there be a human tear
From passion's dross rein'd and clear,
Tis that by loving father shed
Upon a dutious daughter's head.
Earth held no symbol, had no living sign
To image forth the mother's deathless love.

—
Mrs. Hale

AMBER and her singular companion proceeded along the streets in silence, but the maiden's heart was busy with its mingled emotions. Was she about to learn the secret of her birth? she asked herself. Was she about to be restored to the parents of whose love and tenderness she had all her life been deprived? Absorbed with these questions, she did not notice the malignant joy and triumph that beamed in the bold black eyes of her companion.

The woman herself was so delighted with the success of her wicked scheme in inducing Amber to accompany her home that her senses seemed to be in a whirl of delight.

Amber was so unconscious of any plot, and so unsuspicous of any treachery on the part of her guide, that it appeared as if the guilty were about to triumph, and she was again to become the prisoner of Blair Moreland.

But the providence who always protects the innocent had ordained that Amber should be shielded from all evil, and that her trials and misfortunes should soon terminate.

As Amber and the woman were crossing a street, each absorbed in her own thoughts, a sudden cry was raised from the people on the side-walks, and the maiden instantly became aware that they were directly in the path of a runaway horse, which was approaching them at a terrific speed.

With a cry of warning to her companion, she flew towards the side-walk.

The woman attempted to follow her, tripped or stumbled, and fell prostrate upon the ground.

The next moment one of the horse's feet was planted upon her chest and two wheels passed over her body.

A cry of horror arose from the bystanders as the horse flew on in its course and the woman made no attempt to rise. A small crowd immediately collected around her, and friendly hands carried her into an apothecary's shop near at hand, it being discovered that she still lived.

The apothecary, who was also a surgeon, dismissed the eager and horror-stricken crowd, allowing only Amber to remain, and examined into the extent of the woman's injuries.

"Oh, I cannot breathe!" declared Miss Warr, in a hollow whisper. "Am I going to die? Tell me I shall live!"

Her anguished gaze rested pleadingly upon the surgeon's face, but she derived no hope from its expression.

"Oh, must I die?" she whispered, with a faint and hollow moan. "I am not fit to die!"

The surgeon looked at her pityingly, and she resumed:

"You mean that I must die? Tell me how long I can live?"

"Not more than two or three hours, I should judge," said the surgeon, as gently as he could. "You had better send for your friends to take you home, or to a hospital—"

"I will not go to a hospital!" whispered the woman, her poor crushed breast heaving convulsively. "Only two or three hours to live! Only two or three hours!"

She moaned bitterly.

Amber's tender heart was touched by the misery of the woman, as well as horrified at her sudden calamity, and she now sobbed aloud.

"Who is that?" whispered Miss Warr, restlessly. "Crying for me! Let me see your face!"

Amber lifted her tear-stained countenance into the woman's view, and gently pressed her hand.

"You cry for me!" said the woman. "Strange! And I have injured you so! Oh, I cannot die with this load of guilt upon me! I cannot die without doing one act of justice! Perhaps heaven may pardon my faults if I restore you to your friends!"

The thought seemed to afford her some comfort, and she became eager to act upon it.

Whispering to Amber to draw her purse from her pocket, she bade her pay the surgeon, and have a cab called without an instant's delay.

To Amber's surprise, the purse was very well filled.

The surgeon sent out for a cab, convinced by the dying woman's earnestness that the most must be made of her brief remnant of life, and he assisted her into the vehicle, offering to go with her.

His offer was accepted, and he assisted Amber into the cab, following himself.

"Tell him to drive to the Marquis of Ardencourt's, Park Lane," whispered Miss Warr.

The surgeon obeyed, and they drove off.

Amber listened to the address given with wonder and incredulity. She feared that Miss Warr had become delirious when she heard the name of the noble Marquis of Ardencourt, but one glance at the clear, though glassy eyes of the woman assured her that she still retained her senses.

The journey was long, or it appeared so, and the surgeon continually applied restoratives to the mouth and nostrils of the dying woman, but by the time they had arrived at their destination the ashen hues of approaching dissolution had begun to spread over her features.

"Will the marquis see you?" asked the surgeon when the cab stopped before an imposing-looking residence. "What message shall I send him?"

The woman whispered a few words in the surgeon's ear, which made him start and survey Amber narrowly.

Losing no time, however, he ascended the marble steps, knocked, and demanded to see the marquis. He then disappeared within the dwelling, but almost immediately re-appeared, followed by a couple of servants in livery.

Miss Warr was carefully lifted from her uncomfortable position in the vehicle, and carried into the house, Amber following her in a state of bewilderment. They were ushered into a reception room, the

woman placed upon a couch, and the servants dismissed.

They had hardly disappeared when a noble-looking lady and gentleman entered the apartment.

They were the Marquis and Marchioness of Ardencourt.

The former was a stately gentleman in the prime of life, with a countenance in which beamed an expression of kindness and benevolence. The latter was a lovely lady, somewhat younger than her husband, still beautiful and possessing a gentle dignity that was inexpressibly charming.

"You sent us a message just now," she said, regarding the dying woman with tremulous eagerness, "to the effect that you had come to restore to us the child so cruelly stolen from us years ago! Where is she?"

"I stole her!" gasped Miss Warr, unheeding the final question of the marchioness. "She was with her nurse in the park, and while the nurse was talking with a friend I carried off the child! I did it in the hope of getting a great reward for her!"

She paused, struggling for breath.

"Where is she now?" exclaimed the marquis excitedly.

"There!" cried the woman, half-arising by a great effort, and pointing at Amber, who had retreated a little. "There she is! Behold your daughter!"

The marquis and Lady Ardencourt turned, looked at the sweet, agitated countenance of Amber, and their hearts immediately acknowledged the relationship between them. They clasped the bewildered girl to their hearts and shed tears of joy over her.

"You can prove the truth of your words?" said the marquis, when his first excitement had passed.

"There was a chain—" gasped the woman.

With trembling hands, Amber drew her necklace from her neck and placed it in the hands of his lordship.

It was instantly recognized as a gift of the marquis to her ladyship before their marriage, and before he had come into possession of his title.

"I will make an affidavit that she is your daughter," declared the woman, in feeble accents. "With my dying breath I declare the truth of what I have just uttered!"

The surgeon had been busily writing down the woman's statements, and he now requested her to sign it. As a last effort of expiring nature, she did so, and fell back dead!

"My daughter!" whispered the marchioness, drawing the maiden nearer to her. "Found at last!"

"How much she looks like you!" exclaimed the marquis. "I think I should have known her anywhere. It is impossible not to be struck by the resemblance!"

The marquis led the way into an adjoining apartment, and there Amber was obliged again and again to relate the history of her life, even to her abduction by Blair Moreland.

In the midst of their rejoicings, Lord and Lady Moreland, and the Honourable Blair Moreland entered the apartment with the assurance of near relatives.

"That girl here!" ejaculated Lady Moreland, as soon as she had greeted her relatives. "My dear brother, let me assure you that she is unworthy your notice. If she has come here to complain of Blair—"

"Allow me to interrupt your ladyship," said the marquis courteously but coldly. "This young lady is my long-lost daughter and heiress, the Lady Eola Grange!"

"You—you have adopted her?"

"No, she is ours by blood. She was stolen from us, as you remember?"

In a few brief sentences he made Lord and Lady Moreland acquainted with Amber's history, and the maiden was overwhelmed with the congratulations of her uncle and aunt.

The marquis then related the story of Amber's abduction, and concluded by declaring:

"Blair's agitation at seeing the necklace of which he has often seen the counterpart in Lady Ardencourt's possession, and of whose disappearance he well knew, and his subsequent offer of marriage to Eola, convince me that he had fathomed the secret of her birth. It will, perhaps, be sufficient punishment for his wickedness for him to know that he is no longer my heir apparent! The estates of Ardencourt will go to the daughter of the house!"

Blair Moreland became pale with shame and rage.

"But, my dear brother," said Lady Moreland, "couldn't a compromise be effected? I am sure Blair is repentant."

"No. He is not worthy to be the husband of my child," replied the marquis, gazing proudly and fondly at Amber.

The Morelands did not linger long, but hastened to hide their mortification in their own dwelling. Lord Moreland, however, seemed truly rejoiced at the happiness of the Ardencourts, and he whispered his con-

gratulations to Amber with a tone of sincerity which could not be doubted.

"Oh, father! mother! how happy I am!" declared Amber, as she sat between them, the object of the fond caresses of each.

"And so are we!" said her mother, with a gush of happy tears.

"I wish dear Blanche Longley could know who I am," said Amber, her lovely face beaming with joy.

"She was so good to me, dear mother."

"I doubt her goodness after what you have said of her," observed the marquis. "But you can go and see her, my child. We will accompany you, to tender our thanks to Sir Ralph Courtney for his father's care and love for you."

Amber had not explained the supposed contempt of Ralph for herself, and therefore her parents felt it to be a duty, as well as a pleasure, to call at Courtney House, and communicate their joy to Amber's earliest friends.

The carriage was immediately ordered, and the happy parents and their no less happy child set out for Courtney House.

(To be continued.)

BESSY SMALL.

CHAPTER I.

I FALL IN LOVE.

The old farmhouse was not a very lively place; but my widowed mother clung to it with the tenacity with which age always clings to home and early associations. No arguments of mine could induce her to fix her residence in the great city, only a few miles distant.

At my solicitation, she had years before, when I was first admitted to the bar, taken up her abode there; but she had soon grown tired of its noise, bustle, and unsociability, and gladly returned to the old farmhouse and her early friends.

So I was bound, when I had any spare time—and in fact I had too much, as my father's death had left me in possession of ample means, and having no spur to exertion I did not follow my profession so ardently as I might have done had I depended upon it for a livelihood—to visit her at the old place, gladden her fond eyes with the sight of her sole offspring, and relieve the monotony of her existence by a month of my society.

These periodical visits did us both good; as they pleased her, and the country air was like a tonic to me after a lengthened sojourn in town, which—I may as well confess it—I passed in rather a "fast" style, having acquired all the small vices of the age.

I invariably selected the summer for my visits; as the fishing was excellent in the neighbourhood, and I am rather partial to old Isaac Walton's gentle pastime.

So I passed the time on the broad sheet of water which the inhabitants dignified with the title of "lake," boating or fishing, or else in scouring the green lanes on the back of my favourite pony, as black as night, with an eye of fire, a perfect terror to the village urchins as I dashed by them, for my style of riding was a wild gallop, which Ebony, as I call him, infinitely prefers to a gentle canter.

My mother took little heed of my incomings and outgoings. So long as I enjoyed myself, and the fresh air and exercise brought back the colour to my cheeks that a London life had made pallid, and constant bathing crisped my brown hair into a resemblance to the curly-headed darning she had trotted on her knee before grey threads were mixed with her own dark tresses, she was content.

I chatted with her old cronies, and no matter how much they bored me, never suffered it to become manifest.

I was always on my good behaviour at home, for I knew how sensitive the village folks were to any slight or ridicule.

One subject of difference alone arose between my mother and myself. She was most anxious to have me marry and settle down in life; she having formed the opinion that I was not exactly capable of taking care of myself, but needed a wife to give me steadiness, as a ship does ballast.

Some glimpses of my London life had been revealed to her, and she suddenly grew alarmed at the thought of my being a little too "wild." With true womanly instinct, she conceived the idea that a good wife was the necessary corrective; and perhaps she was not far from right after all.

Having come to this conclusion, she unburdened her mind to me; and as I neither assented nor dissent, she cast about her to see what young lady in the neighbourhood was worthy of becoming her daughter-in-law.

Though I rather ridiculed the idea of choosing a wife as one would a horse, she persisted in her in-

tention until it finally grew into a hobby, and became a little annoying.

I was trotted around to visit all the eligible young ladies in the neighbourhood, receiving the somewhat flattering admonition from my mother that I "had but to choose."

Of course the natural result followed. I did not make my choice. The idea of being led up to a young girl, with the intimation that her father was worth so much, that it was an excellent match, that I could not do better, and so on, was rather revolting to my feelings, as I had some poetry in my composition, and possessed the idea that, when the right one came, I should know it without any prodding, and accept my "manifest destiny." My mother grew annoyed at her repeated failures, said I was too particular, and recited for my benefit an ancient fable, the argument of which was that a certain individual—a prince, I think, he was—being led into a forest of beautiful birds, was told to take his choice, with the understanding that he must make that choice before he got out of the wood. The prince proceeds upon his journey, but becomes bewildered by the gaudy plumage of the innumerable birds, and pushes on, waiting to choose the handsomest, until he finally reaches the end of the forest, without making any choice, and there is nothing left for him but an ugly old raven. There was no misunderstanding the application of this elegant allegory.

Notwithstanding this, I made no choice, but took to fishing stronger than ever; and when I was thinking of anything but women, I fell in love. It happened in this way.

At the end of the lake was a little hotel, kept by an old fellow by the name of Ben Dribrats, which was quite a resort to the fishermen, and he was somewhat celebrated for getting up fish suppers. When I was joined in my sport by any of the young fellows in the neighbourhood, or from town, as often happened, we used to take our fish to the little hotel, get Ben to cook them, and serve them up. He did this very tastily; and as he had the good sense to keep the best of wines and cigars, we generally had a very nice time of it.

The meal was usually set in a small apartment looking out upon the lake, from which we always had a cool breeze, and served by some rustic maid from the village, more celebrated for a general healthy look than for beauty.

One afternoon, to my great astonishment, instead of the rosy-cheeked buxom damsel who was accustomed to serve us, a new attendant made her appearance.

The change did not seem to affect my companion much—Tom Hayricks, the worthy deacon's hopeful son and heir—he had evidently seen her before.

But she made such an impression upon me—and I am not very susceptible, I assure you—that I actually could not eat my supper.

It seemed as if my soul went out to her at the very first glance. I had met my fate: I knew it, and resigned myself to my destiny. Yes; I, Harvey Pastern, a wealthy man and considered as *blâsé* in the beauties of town, had fallen in love with a servant girl in a paltry hotel. Wouldn't my mother's hair bristle up with indignation if she knew it?

All this time I know you expect a description of my charmer.

You have prepared yourself to hear of something transcendently lovely—a realization of a poet's dream, who goes mad over the description of his mistress's charms.

But this girl had nothing of the sort. I question if you would have thought her worthy of a second glance. Tom Hayricks did not; for when I remarked as she left the room that she was rather pretty, he answered, carelessly, "So, so."

It was plain she had created no impression upon him; and I felt quite a satisfaction at the thought, for Tom was a good-looking fellow.

Why had she created such an impression upon me? Upon my life, I cannot say. Love is an epidemic: its subtle essence is in the air, and you are inoculated before you know it.

She was not handsome, as I said; some people would have called her plain. Her features were not regular, or formed in classic mould. Her complexion was dark almost to sallowness, and she had not the slightest tinge of colour in her cheeks. Her forehead was broad and unnaturally high, she had a long straight nose, a large hazel eye, the smallest of mouths, and a pointed chin. Her hair was black, and arranged in smooth bands on either side of her broad brow.

There was a world of decision in the thin lips, and a slumberous fire in the dreamy eyes. She carried her head with a peculiar, disdainful air, impossible to describe—a mixture of haughtiness and humbleness.

Her form was well-proportioned, lithe, and her every motion grace itself. Notwithstanding the dress she wore—nothing could have been plainer or neater—she gave me the idea of a queen in masquerade.

I claim to be something of an adept in discovering character.

This girl's face was the title-page to a story which I was determined to read. It interested me as no face had ever done before.

CHAPTER II.

RESEARCHES AFTER TRUTH.

"So Ben has got a new girl," I remarked to Tom, as I helped him to a fish nicely browned.

"Yes," he returned briefly.

"Who is she? Where did she come from?" I asked, assuming a careless tone to conceal my eager curiosity.

"Nobody knows where she came from. She is not particularly communicative upon that point, for I asked Ben myself the first time I saw her here. She has been here about a week now."

"I never saw her before."

"No? Well, there is nothing remarkable about her. She came to the village a poor girl seeking employment, and Ben took her in. She gave her name as Bessy Small—which the boys have already twisted into 'Small Bessy,' on account of her size. Ben thinks, and I am of the same opinion, that the name is only an assumed one, as she is somewhat close in regard to her antecedents. The probability is that she has seen better days, and some sudden and unexpected reverse of fortune has thrown her out upon the world to get her living the best way she can. She has evidently received a good education—her conversation betrays that—and there is a certain air about her that speaks of gentle breeding."

"I observed that at the first glance."

"Indeed! I suppose it is the old story: brought to sudden poverty, she was too proud to depend upon her relatives, but determined to work her own way through the world. I admire her pluck, don't you?"

"I certainly do."

We finished our supper without any further allusions to Bessy Small, but I went home with my mind full of the strange girl; and that night black hair and hazel eyes mingled, in delightful confusion, in my dreams. In the morning I had come to the conclusion that my "destiny" was Bessy Small, and I determined to work it out.

My visits to the lake were now of daily occurrence. Fishing was a capital excuse; but my rod lay idle on the bank, and I sat in the shade, puffing away leisurely at a cigar, and waiting for an opportunity to exchange a word with Bessy Small as she fitted by in the pursuit of her avocations. She was very shy and distant at first; but she thawed gradually, and we soon became good friends.

At the moment we began to be intimate, I discovered a fact that aroused the demon jealousy within my breast. Bessie had become quite a favourite with the frequenters of the little hotel. She had a ready tongue to answer all, and her smiles were bestowed, I thought, altogether too indiscriminately. Old Ben's business began to improve wonderfully: all the young fellows came to eat his suppers, and chat with "Small Bessy," as she was now invariably called.

Another circumstance filled me with alarm. Bessy had grown handsome. The fresh country air had brought back the colour to her cheeks, her eyes sparkled with a healthy lustre, her step was light and buoyant, and she caroled like a bird from morn till night. No wonder old Ben prized her, and treated her more like a daughter than a servant. Even his brother, old Caleb Dribrats, who had passed all his life in London in a musty office until he had become as dry and withered as his old parchments, shared in the favourable opinion with which Bessy was regarded. Caleb was on a visit to his brother, his usual practice of a summer, when Bessy first made her appearance at the hotel.

He was rather a singular character—a specimen of that class who make money their idol, and worship it with a fervency life-lasting.

A poor country boy he had left his native village, and cast his lot in the great city, drudged and toiled and scraped and hoarded, until he was said to be worth quite a snug sum.

It was he who had built the little hotel, and put Ben, his junior by some ten years, into it.

At this time he was fifty years of age—an old bachelor—he could not afford to get married, he said—a skinny, greasy little man. He was now the confidential clerk to a great broker in the city.

Some people said that old Caleb had not been over scrupulous in his pursuit of wealth, and had soiled his fingers in some very peculiar transactions. Be that as it may, the old sinner had been cunning enough to keep clear of the law, and had never been "hauled over the coals" for his shortcomings.

One affair, however, in which he was concerned, had been noised about considerably; and Mr. Braswich, his present employer, had been equally associated in the affair.

It was a singular one.

I was in town at the time, and heard all that was ever made public, which was very little.

As near as I can remember, Mr. Brasimuch and Caleb were then both employed by a private banker—a Mr. Mainwright—who had received large sums from different parties for investment.

One day he declared that his safe had been robbed of valuable securities; but somehow a rumour got out that this was merely a trick to defraud his depositors. There was a run on his bank, and he was ruined; and though he sacrificed every pound of his private fortune, which was quite a large one, and paid every demand against him, his credit was destroyed.

He took the affair so much to heart that he removed his family from the city, and was never heard of afterwards.

Mr. Brasimuch resumed the business in his own name; and his former employer, Mr. Mainwright, passed out of memory like a man dead.

Old Caleb, as I have said, when the summer solstice came on, left his dingy office in the city, and came to the lake to rusticate, as if anything could put new life into his dry bones.

I soon discovered that there was more humanity in his withered carcass than I had given him credit for. Keenly alive to every circumstance, and with eyes rendered watchful by jealousy, I soon perceived that Caleb was smitten with the fresh charms and rosy youth of Bessy Small.

I did not wonder at that.

Your old man is just as susceptible as your young one, and quite as inflammable.

But what I did wonder at was that Bessy seemed to encourage the old sinner, and flirted with him outrageously. It was as much as I could do to keep my hands off the antiquated lover.

Many a time of a cool summer's evening, when her work was done and she sat in the little balcony sewing, with the old dotard seated beside her, whispering soft nonsense, and leering at her out of his bleared eyes, it was as much as I could do to refrain from rushing upon him, and pitching him neck and heels into the lake.

I think a sudden and unexpected cold bath would have cooled his passion. But I did refrain. It was she that made me.

She seemed to know instinctively when the jealous fit was on me, and gave me a look from one of those speaking eyes of hers, which said plainly, "Don't. Can't you see that I am only jesting with the old ape?"

And so I refrained; for somehow those eyes had acquired a strange power over me, and I had got into the habit of obeying their slightest request. But this state of things could not last for ever. Our courtship hitherto had been one of glances altogether. True, we understood each other. She did not need for me to tell her that I loved her, and I was satisfied that I did not press an unwelcome suit; but I determined to come to an understanding, to have an assurance from her lips, and put a stop to this flirting, if possible, which seemed entirely uncalled for, and a great waste of time, which otherwise might be devoted to me.

I am not apt to delay the execution of any plan when I have once determined upon it. It never was my policy to beat about the bush, but to go straight on to the given point. So, when I said "good-night," I gave her a look, and then walked down the road until I was lost in the shadows. I paused under the elm-tree in the bend. In ten minutes light footsteps came tripping along, and Bessy came up to my side. There was no moon that night. The lights from the hotel gleamed faintly. I could scarcely distinguish her features in the gloom.

CHAPTER III.

UNDER THE ELM.

"Are you there?" asked Bessy.

"Yes," I answered. "I want to speak with you."

"I know you do. Do you know, sir, that I am conferring a great favour on you by coming to meet you? What would the good people hereabouts say if they knew that Bessy Small met Harvey Pastern, the rich widow's son, under the great elm, alone, and at night? Why, Mr. Dribrats would give me warning at once."

She laughed; but it was a short abrupt laugh, containing more scorn than merriment. I was not to learn now that Bessy had a rather disdainful opinion of the "good people" by whom she was surrounded; but, strangely enough, this disdain was carefully concealed from every one but myself. She had ever spoken her mind to me with the most unbounded trust. She evidently knew her confidence was not misplaced.

"Let them say what they please," I answered, somewhat hotly; "and if anybody does discover this

meeting, and makes any comments upon it, just tell him or her, whichever it may chance to be, that you came to meet the man who stands ready to marry you just as quick as you will have him."

She clasped her hands together, and laughed gaily—a free and natural laugh this time.

"Only listen to him," she cried. "And did you entreat me to come here, with such a beseeching look, merely to tell me that?"

"Precisely."

"Why, I knew all that before."

And she laughed again.

"The language of the eyes has not failed then?"

"Of course not. The way you fidget about whenever I speak to Mr. Caleb Dribrats is enough to open other eyes besides mine."

"The old dotard! Why do you waste time on him?"

Her brow darkened, I could see it even in the dim light in which we stood, and her thin lips contracted with a cold, hard expression.

"I may have a purpose," she answered absently.

"What purpose? Surely, you would never think of marrying him?"

"Marry him?" she laughed long and loudly. "Oh no! I should just as soon think of marrying my grandfather. Marrying is the last thing I think of at present."

"Don't say that. I began to have hopes that I could persuade you to marry me."

"Did you?" She laughed again. "Do you know what you are talking about, Harvey Pastern? You are young, wealthy, and of a good family: you might take your pick—for you really are, without flattery, a fine type of manhood; while I am poor, obscure, and of a family whose name might be a disgrace. And yet you have made me a proposal of marriage. What do you think your friends would say if they knew it?"

"D— deliver me from my friends!" I exclaimed. I was going to be a little profane, but I wisely refrained. "I marry to please myself, not my friends."

"Very true; but still it is very annoying to meet the contempt and derision of former associates."

"The world is wide, Bessy; and I have wealth enough to make a home far from all annoyances. Two united hearts need neither friends nor as-sociates."

"True again," she answered, gravely. "But your mother: have you thought of her? She would not consent; and could you deprive her of the pleasure she feels in your society?"

I became thoughtful. I had very strong doubts of gaining my mother's consent myself. I had not yet arranged matters if she refused, leaving them until I had decided the question.

"Now then," said Bessy, rightly guessing the cause of my silence, "acknowledge that I am right, shake hands, and say good-night, and forget that so humble a personage as Bessy Small ever crossed your path."

She held out her hand; and I took it in mine, and held her fast. I had more to say.

"I dare say, Bessy," I began, "that you have given me the very best of advice; but unfortunately, being in love, I am not in a condition to profit by good advice. I love you fervently, with the first passion of my life. You are the only woman I have ever met whom I consider worthy of a second thought. I shall never cease to love you, and could not, even if such was my desire, which it is not, drive your image from my mind. You are not, I feel assured, in the position to which your birth and education entitle you. Confide in me—you know you can do so in safety—and suffer me to restore you to that place in society which some misfortune or accident has deprived you of."

"Why should you think me otherwise than I seem?" she asked, abruptly.

"Your manner, air, conversation, all convince me of the fact."

She seemed annoyed at my words.

"Have I played my part so badly, then?" she murmured, almost petulantly. "Do you think others share in your opinion?" she added, quickly, aloud.

"Perhaps, but not to the same extent as myself. They have not been so interested in discovering your true character as I have."

My answer appeared to afford her great satisfaction.

"It seems to me," she laughingly exclaimed, "that your discoveries have not amounted to much."

"True. I look to you for a solution of what still mystifies me."

"Proceed, Mr. Lawyer, with your cross-examination, for such appears to be your desire."

"Briefly, then, who and what are you?"

"You shall have my history in a nutshell. I call myself Bessy Small, I am twenty years of age, and I am maid-of-all-work at Mr. Benjamin Dribrat's hotel."

"Is that all you can tell me?"

"That is all I can tell even you."

She laid a strong stress on the "you."

"Do you think you are dealing justly with me, Bessy? I love you."

"I do not doubt it. Do you know the first article of a lover's creed?"

"Upon my word, I must plead ignorance."

"I will tell you—faith. The man who loves me, and hopes one day to win me, must have faith—entire, absolute, implicit faith. Whatever I do, no matter how circumstances may be against me, or however strange my conduct may appear, he must never doubt me for a moment. If you cannot accede to that condition, you may as well go home, for you are only wasting your time here."

Did ever lover have a mistress so absolute, so provokingly cool? I attempted to temporize.

"Bessie, you are hardly fair. Where there is love, there must be confidence. Come, now, confess your name is not Bessy Small."

"My name is Bessy," she answered, promptly; "and that I am small, your own eyes can convince you."

In law we would call that "dodging the question." I tried again.

"You are here for some secret purpose?"

"If I am, I intend to keep it a secret," she answered with provoking coolness.

"Even from me?" reproachfully.

"Even from you," coldly.

"You do not love me!"

"Do you think so?" archly, and in that vivacious tone which was so charming from her lips.

"Bessy, I am going home!"

"Good night."

She held out her hand.

I took it. It lay passively in mine.

"Do you know what I shall do when I reach home?"

"Go to bed?"

"Not at once. I shall go to my mother, shall tell her that I have at last found a girl whom I think worthy to become her daughter-in-law, and ask her consent to our marriage."

The little fingers closed over mine with a gentle pressure.

"You are beginning to have faith in me?"

"Yes."

The next instant, Bessy bounded away in the darkness. That was our "good-night."

I walked home like one in a dream—an ecstatic delirium. If you ever have been in the same position, you know just how I felt: if not, words are inadequate; and, as card-players say in *echre*, "I pass."

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT I SAW IN THE WOOD.

On arriving home, I found my mother busy at her usual evening's occupation—knitting woolen stockings. I drew a chair beside her, and opened the ball at once. I need not recount our entire conversation—which was prolix, and of a somewhat stormy nature.

I began by reminding her that her great desire was to see me happily married and settled for life. She immediately displayed the greatest interest. I then told her that I had at last found the one I had been looking for. Of course she was naturally curious to know who it was. There was no help for it: she had to be told all I knew myself; which, as you know, was not much.

Her indignation knew no bounds; and the "idol of my affections" was spoken of as a "deceitful husby," a "cunning minx," and in other epithets equally choice, who had artfully entrapped an "innocent young man" (I was the innocent, and in this connection my mother used the word in its fullest sense) into a promise of marriage.

I quote from my mother now. "The good-for-nothing husby need never expect to be received as her daughter. Mother to a tavern girl! Good heavens! what were we coming to? and your dead father's coat of arms hanging over the mantelpiece, and he so proud of it too: paid twenty-five pounds to have it engraved. And we descended from the old Romans. Talk about descending from William the Conqueror? what was he to the old Romans? Julius Caesar was one of them."

And so she went on like the sifce of a milldam; and I sat quietly, and heard it all, waiting until the water—figuratively speaking—had run out. The words only stopped with her breath.

"Bessy Small!" she gasped at length, shutting down the gates. "Good Lord!"

And she recommenced her knitting in the most energetic manner.

Then I began. I ventured to suggest that true desert did not arise from any position in life; with a slight touch from Bulwer, that "kings had stooped from their high sphere" to wed with peasant maids. She had mentioned William the Conqueror. It was considered a great honour to be descended from that

illustrious robber—I mean warrior; and yet, after all, he was only the son of a tanner's daughter, whose character would not bear the closest inspection. In fact, I mixed up history and logic until I got befogged myself, and completely bewildered my maternal relative.

Her anger died away in speechless wonder, her knitting-needles fell unheeded in her lap, and she sat gazing at me with open-mouthed admiration.

"Ah, Harvey!" she said at length, shaking her head gravely, "you are smart, though I say it; and if you would only be a little more attentive to business, you would make the smartest lawyer in the country. Your father always said that a good education was the best thing in the world; and often and often I have heard him wish he had had the same opportunity he gave you. Well, you know, after all, what you want. If you love the girl, and she is what you say she is—pretty and well-educated—why, marry her. I suppose you have made up your mind to do that any way. But take my advice in one thing. Don't marry her here: take her to town, and keep her there a year or two. Don't tell people where you found her, and they will never know it. Good Lord! I wouldn't have our relations know anything about it for a mint of money. Don't bring her here; but when you are settled, I will come and see you."

I was too much pleased to have gained her consent to grumble at the conditions, though I had an idea that she would feel it an honour some day to receive Bessy Small beneath her roof. And so the affair was ended between us. Bessy Small's name was never mentioned from that night, and matters went on as usual; only my mother would smile significantly whenever I took my fishing-pole, and started off for the lake.

One evening, after leaving the little hotel, where I had supper as usual, attended by Bessy, who was strangely thoughtful and absent, Tom Hayricks persuaded me to walk up to his house to show me a "stunning" meerschaum which he had just purchased. His house lay on the other side of the lake, beyond the hotel. The road took quite a curve; but there was a short cut through the woods. I was familiar with this short cut, and after taking a few whiffs at Tom's meerschaum, as it was a moonlight night, I came back by that way.

As I approached a small grove of trees that lay at the back of the hotel, I saw a woman's white dress shining in the moonlight, and heard the sound of voices. I paused, and then stole quietly behind a tree to listen. I performed this discreditable action because I had discovered that the woman was Bessy in a close and earnest conversation with a man. "All's fair in love," you know. If I had a rival, I was justified in using an accident which might lead to the discovery.

I could see Bessy's face quite plainly; but her companion, the man, was so muffled up (this was in the summer, mind—a very suspicious circumstance), that I could not distinguish a single feature. Nor could I, from where I stood, overhear a word of their conversation.

How long the conference had lasted, I know not. I had arrived just in time to see the end. There was a close embrace, a ringing kiss, and the man disappeared through the trees, making for the road. My first impulse was to follow him, and annihilate him upon the spot; but, on second thoughts, I considered, that if anybody was to blame, it was Bessy; so I resolved to give her "a piece of my mind."

She was so absorbed in thought that she did not perceive my approach until I stood at her side. Then she started with a shrill cry of alarm. But the moment she recognized me, the look of terror vanished from her face, and she grew quite at ease. She held out her hand to me, and smiled a welcome.

"Is it you, Harvey?" she said. "Only you? You quite startled me."

I was rather bewildered at this reception, after what I had seen. I rejected her hand, folded my arms and sternly confronted her.

"Jealous again, eh?" cried this incomprehensible woman, with a ringing laugh.

"Have I not cause? I saw the man who just left your side, after such an affectionate farewell."

"Saw him, did you?" she asked eagerly. "Then you would know him again?"

"No; I should not. I did not see his face. I only saw that it was a man."

"How do you know that it was not a woman dressed up in a man's clothes?" she asked.

"I am satisfied it was a man," I returned with decision; "and now who was it?"

"I decline to answer that question," was the curt reply.

"Have I not a right to ask?"

"No. Our compact was 'implicit faith.' If your eyes see black, and I tell you it is white, you must believe me, not your eyes. This much to satisfy you. You have no rival: what you have seen to-night

needs no justification, did you know who that man was?"

"That is precisely what I want to know."

"That is precisely what you cannot know, at present."

"Do you take me for a fool?"

"Oh, no! If I did, I should not take you at all; and I expect I shall have to one of these days."

It was no use—she had bewitched me. I felt my anger and jealousy melting into thin air.

"If you do not like my conditions," she continued, "renounce me. But so long as you follow me, you must be blind and deaf at my will. Now listen: I leave here to-morrow."

"Leave? Where are you going?"

"To London—to be housekeeper for Mr. Caleb Dribrats. He is in love with me, and thinks I will marry him. What fools love makes of the men!"

"Me included?"

"Oh! that is your own application. Now kiss me. Good-bye: it is late."

"I shall follow you to town."

"I know you will. I may have a use for you." She was gone—dancing through the trees like a fairy.

I went home more in love than ever.

You would not have been such a fool? Oh! wouldn't you? Just you get in love once, and try it!

The next morning very urgent business required my immediate presence in London.

My mother smiled.

"Don't bring her here," she said. "William the Conqueror's mother may have been a tanner's daughter; but the ancient Romans came over before the Conqueror."

CHAPTER V.

I AM OFFERED A SITUATION.

I HAD re-opened my office, and had resumed business to all appearance, though few clients favoured me with a call.

The chief part of my time was occupied in loitering around the habitation of Mr. Caleb Dribrats, with the hope of catching an occasional glimpse of Bessy. I could not call upon her as she had expressly forbidden me to do. Thus a fortnight passed away.

One day, while I was seated in my office, busily engaged in sketching pen-and-ink portraits of Bessy on a blotter, a lady was announced. She seated herself in the chair I proffered, and, when we were alone, raised her veil. It was Bessy herself.

She laughed heartily in her usual free-and-easy manner, at my astounisment.

"You here?" I stammered, as soon as I recovered from my surprise.

"As you see," she returned, merrily. "The mountain could not come to Mahomet, and so Mahomet comes to the mountain."

"It is an age since I have seen you."

"A lover's age—only a fortnight. You are looking remarkably well. You have not pined away to a shadow yet. Why don't you protest how glad you are to see me? Where are all your rhapsodies? Dumb as an oyster? I have come to take you into my confidence."

"At last! It is about time."

"Don't be too sanguine: I don't intend to tell you any more than I can help. Don't look so disconsolate: remember, 'faith' to the end; which, I hope, is not far distant."

"I am rejoiced to hear it."

"In the first place, of course you are anxious to know what I have been doing in the last fortnight. I have received two offers of marriage, and—accepted both!"

"The deuce you have!"

"That is to say, I have made both my swains believe that I have accepted, which amounts to the same thing."

"I don't exactly see it in that light."

"No matter: I know what I am about."

"I wish I did."

"All is good time; patience, my estimable friend. Now listen. I came here as Mr. Caleb Dribrats' housekeeper, with the understanding, on his part, that I am soon to change that title for the more sounding one of Mrs. Dribrats. But mark what follows: his employer, Mr. Brasimuch, calls to see him, and I receive him in the absence of the ancient Caleb. Mr. Brasimuch is a widower, without kith or kin; a pompous old schemer, with uncounted wealth. He is quite charmed with me, and chats an hour while he awaits the arrival of Caleb. I improve the opportunity, Caleb comes at last, and is very much chagrined at finding us together. The jackal is afraid of the lion, and with reason. Mr. Brasimuch goes away very much in love. He repeats his visits, always happening to come when Caleb is out. He is in want of a housekeeper, and hints

vaguely at placing me at the head of the finest establishment in town. Why not? Gold often buys youth and beauty, though the hand that offers it is palsied. I desert the disconsolate Dribrats, and take up my residence with the millionaire; and when I wish to be Mrs. Brasimuch, I have only to say so."

"I'd give a small sum, Bessy, to know what you are driving at?"

"Would you? The idea of a little woman like me puzzling a lawyer. But I won't forget you in my good fortune."

"Thank you," I returned dryly.

I was not altogether pleased with what I had heard.

"Do you know Mr. Brasimuch?"

"No; never saw him."

"Do you think he knows you—that he has ever seen you?"

"Not to my knowledge. I never mixed with his set."

"I thought not. Then you will do very nicely. Yesterday Mr. Brasimuch mentioned in my presence that he was very much in want of a confidential secretary for some new speculation he is about to engage in, and would prefer a young man from the country, if he could get one, unacquainted with London life: in short, he wants a green hand, who might be made a tool of to further some rascality. A thought flashed through my mind like an inspiration; and I instantly replied that I had a brother, well educated, and a good pannier, who was most anxious to obtain a situation in London. He jumped at the chance, and told me to write for my brother—that the place should be his."

"Where is this brother?"

"Not very far off—about the length of your chair from mine."

To say that I was thunderstruck is a mild description of the effect her words had upon me.

"Me? Your brother? Do you mean to say that you intend to introduce me to Mr. Brasimuch as your brother, and that you expect me to become his private secretary?"

"That is just what I intend to do, and what I expect you to do," she returned, in the most positive manner. "It is the easiest thing in the world. You have only to shave your moustache, and cut your hair short; you are pretty well browned up fishing on the lake, and you will not look unlike a country youth of twenty-three."

There never was a woman who had such a decided way of making everybody (witness old Caleb and Mr. Brasimuch) she came in contact with do just as she pleased. She overruled every objection, pooh-poohed all my scruples, laughed at my wounded dignity, and the affair ended (as, of course, you knew it would) by my consenting to everything she wished.

I shaved my moustache (I had been six months cultivating it), clipped my curls until I looked like a prize-fighter, put on a last-year's suit so as not to appear too fashionable, packed up a few necessaries in an old valise, was driven to the house of Mr. Brasimuch, where I was introduced as Mr. Harvey Small (and small enough I felt) by the artful Bessy, and speedily installed as "private secretary," entering at once upon the discharge of my duties.

CHAPTER VI.

I AM INDUCED TO COMMIT ROBBERY.

I soon discovered that Mr. Brasimuch had engaged in a hazardous speculation, and my business was to send a stereotyped letter to the gudgeons who were nibbling for shares, and acknowledge the receipt of the money which they were fools enough to send.

I enjoyed myself amazingly, however, being domiciled beneath the same roof with Bessy, and having the pleasure of escorting her to the various places of amusement, and upon excursions up the river. Of course, Mr. Brasimuch saw no harm in this, as I was her brother.

But I observed one singular circumstance about Bessy whenever we went abroad. She invariably wore a thick veil, and never by any chance suffered her face to be seen.

Mr. Brasimuch also noticed this, and was much pleased at it.

He attributed it to her innocence and modesty: the old fool was completely wrapped up in her. His amorous coings, which he took no particular pains to conceal from the brother, made me sick and mad.

It was as much as Bessy could do to keep me within bounds and prevent an explosion, which would have ruined her scheme, whatever that might be. It was a trying time, and I wonder now, looking back, how I ever got through it.

There was a peculiarity about Mr. Brasimuch which—for I am singularly careless about other people's affairs—I should not have noticed myself, had not my attention been called to it by Bessy.

In a corner of the apartment which he used as library and office, and which was the scene of my labours, was a small safe, of which he kept the key, and which he never suffered anybody to go to but himself.

It had got pretty well into the dog-days, and one afternoon, when I was sweltering over my desk, Bessy came into the office.

This was a general habit with her, as Mr. Brasimuch always took a late breakfast, went into the city to his office, and did not return until six o'clock to dinner—so we had the house from twelve until that time to ourselves.

When Bessy had put the house in order and the servants at work, she brought her sewing and kept me company.

I scratched away, and Bessy stitched in silence.

I looked up suddenly, and there she sat like a statue, her work in her lap, and her eyes riveted, so to speak, on the safe in the corner.

"Why, Bessy, what in the world are you thinking about?"

She started guiltily, and coloured to the very temples.

I was surprised at this display of emotion in one generally so emotionless.

"Harvey," she said at length, drawing a long breath, and casting a cautious glance around, "I would give ten years of my life to be permitted to examine the contents of that safe."

"Curiosity, thy name is woman!" I returned, sententiously. "Remember the fate of Bluebeard's wives!"

"It is not altogether curiosity that sways me, but a deeper, stronger motive. I must see the contents of that safe."

"Steal the key, then," I answered carelessly.

"Impossible."

"Why so? Don't you know where he keeps it?"

"Yes; he keeps it upon his person, never leaving it for a moment. Oh! if I could but steal it, just for one half-hour."

Here was a new phase in Bessy's character. She had designs on Mr. Brasimuch's strong-box.

"My dear Bessy," I said a little ironically, "don't you think we can get along without robbing Mr. Brasimuch of his money?"

"His money?" she answered, with infinite scorn. "What do I care for his money? That safe contains nothing but papers."

"Papers? Well, what then? How in the world can they concern you?"

"More than you think, Harvey. No questions; my lips are still sealed, and will be until you help me to open that safe."

"But how can I open it? I am not a locksmith."

"I have heard of impressions on wax taken from a keyhole, and a key thereby made to fit the lock: why could it not be done in this case?"

"It might."

"Then do it," she cried impulsively.

"Look here, Bessy," I remarked, laying down my pen, and wiping off the perspiration from my forehead. I was hot before, but her words put me in a perfect stew. "Look here, Bessy; are you aware that you are suggesting a nice little scheme that will send us both to prison, if we are found out?"

"I do not think so," she answered coolly. "If that safe contains what I think it does, Mr. Brasimuch will not dare to lift a finger against us; and if it does not, he is too much in love to proceed against me. I will bear all the blame; your complicity in the affair shall never be known."

"It is a very ticklish business," I hesitated. "I am already in his house under false pretences; and if we should be detected in breaking open his private safe, I do not very well see how we could get out of it."

"Harvey," she said earnestly, more earnestly than she had ever spoken to me before, "the happiness of a life, the honour of a once respectable family, is at stake. The safe must be opened, or I can never become your wife; for I never will wed you while a stain rests upon the name I bear."

"Are there no other means?"

"None; that safe contains the solution to all my mystery. Open it, and you shall know who and what I am."

It ended as all our discussions ended—in my agreeing to do what she required. Besides, I began to get a glimmering of the truth. Short as my acquaintance was with Mr. Brasimuch, I had discovered that he was a rascal. Undoubtedly he had wronged Bessy in some swindling scheme, of which she was seeking proof among his private papers. So I agreed to open the safe.

I had arranged a very simple plan to accomplish that. It was to go to a safe manufactory and say that I had lost the key of my safe, and request that a man should be sent to open it for me—appointing an

hour when Mr. Brasimuch was sure to be out. If the safe contained what we sought, well and good; if not, we would leave it open, with its contents intact, leaving Mr. Brasimuch to believe that he had accidentally left it unlocked. Bessy entirely approved the scheme.

"Had I known it was so easy," she said, "I should have done it myself without calling you to my assistance. Two heads are better than one, after all; and if I find what I want in that safe, Harvey, you are welcome to mine for the balance of my life."

The next day we put our scheme in operation. The man came and opened the safe, when I gave him an order for a new key, and he departed. We were alone in the office, the safe was open, and we stood before it, trembling with excitement.

"Now, Harvey, quick," cried Bessy. "Find if there are any papers bearing the name of 'Mainwright'?"

I plunged into the safe, and began the search, cautiously replacing things as nearly as possible in their original position. At last, after a thorough search, Bessy growing more feverish every moment, I found a small package marked with the name of "Mainwright." I took it out, and placed it in Bessy's hands. She examined it eagerly, and uttered a cry of joy:

"You need look no further, Harvey," she exclaimed. "These are the missing securities; my task is over, and I have triumphed."

"But what does it all mean?" I asked. "And what is this 'Mainwright' to you?"

"John Mainwright is my father," she answered, proudly. "These securities were stolen from him by Richard Brasimuch, his clerk; and their loss caused his ruin. I was then at a seminary near London. I returned to find my father a beggar. He suspected Brasimuch; but, to have accused him would have led to the destruction of the securities, and with them all proof. I devised my present scheme, with my father's sanction. It was he who aroused your jealousy by embracing me in the wood, where he had come to hear how I had progressed. My scheme was to make the acquaintance of Caleb Dribbits, and through him, of Brasimuch. Neither had seen me since I was a child, hence there was not much fear of recognition. So I came to the little hotel to wait on Harvey Pastern, and fascinate him first of all. You know how I have succeeded with the others. My task is over, my father's fortune and credit will be restored by these, and I shall not come to you a dowerless bride; for if a man ever truly and faithfully won a wife, you are that man."

I waited patiently for the end of this long speech, and then gave the brave little soul a tremendous hug. We left the Brasimuch mansion at once, and went to the humble dwelling where Mr. Mainwright was living in retirement.

He was put in possession of the facts, and I received a cordial welcome.

He resolved to call on Mr. Brasimuch and see what he had to say for himself. We all went together. We found Mr. Brasimuch contemplating his open safe in a melancholy attitude.

He surrendered at once, disengaged his plunder, and was let off, as we all had a repugnance to making the affair public.

The restored papers were enough to exonerate Mr. Mainwright, which was all he cared for.

A short time afterwards I sent a letter to my mother, of which the following is an extract:

"As I am going to be married to Elizabeth Mainwright, daughter of John Mainwright, the banker, I thought you would like to witness the ceremony." She did witness it, and after it was all over, she said to me:

"What's become of that artful hussy we were in such a hurry to marry, and would, too, if it hadn't been for me? What would become of these boys if they hadn't mothers?"

"She is *non est inventus*," I replied.

But as my mother doesn't understand the Latin for "she has disappeared"—she gravely shook her head.

G. L. A.

A SCENE AT FOGO.—A few years ago great herds of seals came off this harbour, and many were killed. The men walked six to ten miles out to sea, and killed the seals with guns and clubs. The big ones are called "harps," and show fight; the young ones are helpless. As soon as slain the seals are flensed, and the blubber and skins of five or six are made into a package. Dogs and men are harnessed to this bundle, and the spoil is dragged home. Our host went out himself, and slew a lot of seals, with which he was proceeding on his homeward march, when a cry was made of "Slip your heels and run." The ice was opening. He stuck to his seals, but presently he came to an open lane of water. Others joined, and they broke off a piece of ice and forded themselves across; but there was another lane before

them. Here another piece was freighted; but this time there was a man too many on board, and the ice-raft began to sink. There was a shout of "Leap for your lives," and one leapt into the water and swam. They all got safe to land at last, but there were hundreds outside, and the whole sea was opening. It was a wild and fearful scene. Distracted women on the shore were shrieking and wringing their hands; dogs were howling in all directions, and men and dogs were struggling in the ice outside. A sudden change of wind drove the pack ashore again, and the men were saved—all but two, who perished.—*An American Tramp in the Fall of 1864.* By the Editor of *Life in Normandy*.

HOT SUMMERS AND COLD WINTERS.

The present summer having been one of the hottest known for many years, perhaps the following short account of a few remarkable winters and summers (selected from longer lists) may not be uninteresting to the general reader.

In the year 401, A.D., the Black Sea was entirely frozen over, and in 462 the Danube; and so thoroughly that Theodosius marched over with an army. Again, in 763, not only the Black Sea but the Straits of the Dardanelles also. The snow in some places rose fifty feet, and the ice was so heaped in the cities as to push down the walls; yet the summer was so hot that the springs dried up.

In 870 the heat was so intense that, near Worms, the reapers dropped dead in the fields; and in 874 the winter was so long and severe that the snow continued to fall from the beginning of November to the end of March, and encumbered the ground so much that the forests were inaccessible for the supply of fuel.

In 1067 the cold was so intense that most of the travellers in Germany were frozen to death on the road, and in 1022 the heat was so intense that both men and animals were struck dead.

In 1130 the earth yawned with drought; springs and rivers disappeared, and even the Rhine was dried up in Alsace; but in 1133 the winter was so cold, that the Po was frozen from Cremona to the sea; heaps of snow rendered the roads impassable; wine-casks were burst, and even the trees split by the action of the frost, with immense noise.

In 1232 the heat was so great, especially in Germany, that eggs were roasted in the sand; but in 1234 a forest was killed by the frost at Ravenna, and in 1236 the Danube was frozen to the bottom.

In 1292 the Rhine was frozen over at Breyssach, and bore loaded waggons, and one sheet of ice extended from Norway to Jutland; yet 1293 was extremely hot, and both the Rhine and Danube were dried up.

The year 1408 was one of the coldest winters ever remembered; the Baltic was frozen over, and wolves came across the ice into Jutland. In 1434 snow fell for forty days without interruption, and in 1468 the winter was so severe in Flanders that the wine distributed to the soldiers was cut into pieces with hatchets, and the same happened in 1544, the wine being frozen into solid lumps.

In 1556 the drought was so great the springs failed, and wheat rose in England from 8s. to 5s. a quarter.

In 1621 and 1622 all the rivers of Europe were frozen. A sheet of ice covered the Hellespont, and the Venetian fleet was choked up in the lagoons of the Adriatic. In 1658 Charles X. crossed the ice from Holstein to Denmark with his whole army, foot and horse, followed by his baggage and artillery. In 1684 many forest trees, and even the oaks in England, were split by the frost. Most of the hollies were killed; almost all the birds perished; and coaches drove over the Thames, which was covered with ice eleven inches thick.

In 1709 occurred "the cold winter," when all the rivers and lakes of Europe were frozen, and even the sea to the distance of several miles from the shore. The frost penetrated three feet into the ground; birds and wild beasts were strewed dead in the fields; and men perished by thousands in their houses. The Adriatic was quite frozen over, and even the coast about Genoa. The winter of 1716 was nearly as severe, and a fair was held on the Thames.

Yet, in 1718, the weather was extremely hot and dry all over Europe. The air felt so oppressive that all the theatres were shut in Paris, and scarcely any rain fell for nine months. The following year was equally hot, and the thermometer rose to 98 deg Fahrenheit. In some places the fruit trees blossomed two and three times.

The winter of 1740 was scarcely inferior in severity to that of 1709. The snow lay eight and ten feet deep in Spain and Portugal; all the lakes in England froze; and many trees were killed by the frost. The year 1746 was remarkably hot; the grass withered and the leaves dropped from the trees, while 1754 was both hot and cold. Next winter was so

severe that in England the strongest ale, exposed to the air in a glass, was covered in less than a quarter of an hour with ice an eighth of an inch thick. The winter of 1776 was so severe that the Danube bore ice five feet thick below Vienna. Wine froze in the cellars of France and Holland; many people were frost-bitten, and vast numbers of birds and fishes perished.

The summer of 1811 was very hot and dry, the winter of 1812 remarkably severe; the one was remarkable for its vintage, the other for the disastrous campaign of Napoleon in Russia.

GRATITUDE'S TRIUMPH.

BACK from the city of Aquila lived an old peasant named Marino. His cot was at the foot of the Apennines, and the mountain torrent rushed past his door. It was late in the evening, and the old peasant sat by the fire side teaching his boy how to make a net. Luigi Marino was only twelve years old, but he was a bright active boy, and his assistance was of no small account to his father. He was not so stout as old Marino could have wished him, but yet the peasant saw that what the lad lacked in physical endowments he more than made up in mental energy.

"What makes your hand tremble so, father?" asked the boy.

"Are you sure it trembled, Luigi?"

"Ah, yes, and your lip trembles, too. And there is trouble on your brow—and your eye moves uneasily. What is it?"

The old man wondered at the aptness of his boy—he wondered how one so young could be possessed of such keen perceptions; but he remembered the faithful wife whom he had put away into the tomb had been a being of rare intellectual endowments, and he fancied that his son partook of her mind and constitution. The old man had to be questioned the second time before he thought fit to answer.

"I'll tell you, my boy," he said, "I am not easy here. There has been a warm rain upon the mountains this afternoon, and I fear the snow is melting. The torrent roars louder and louder every moment."

The boy looked up into his father's face, and the unfinished net was laid aside.

"If there is danger here, let us go," he said, laying his hand on the old man's knee.

Hardly had Luigi ceased speaking, when a low moaning, rumbling noise broke upon his ear. It was distant, but it was fearfully distinct. Nearer and nearer it came, until its voice was like thunder. Marino started up in terror and caught his boy by the arm.

"It is upon us," he uttered. "Let us flee at once. Oh, I feared this, but I thought not it would come so soon. Come my boy, you will need all your strength now."

The old man rushed towards the door, and dragged the boy after him. Away up on the side of the towering mountain, he could see the fiery sparks, where tumbling rocks were crashing against one another in their mad descent, and the thunder of the cataract broke upon his ear with a stunning noise. With one look up the dark mountain, he caught his boy in his arms and fled towards the city. On came the mighty torrent, and on fled the peasant, but the contest was fearfully unequal.

Once Marino stopped, and looked behind him, and then again he hastened on. But his race was short. The mountain avalanche of rocks and trees, of snow and water roared madly behind him, and ere he could gain a shelter he was overtaken and swept down. He struck against a huge rock that lifted it head from the earth, and the vengeful torrent swept on and left him there.

The morning sun broke over the mountain and valley with its golden flood, and John de Castro the noble Count of Avella, sent forth his men to search for those who might have been harmed by the terrific avalanche of the night. They reached the spot where Marino had lived, but the humble cot had been swept away.

Then they followed down the course of the torrent, and at length they found a human form lodged against a rock. They pulled the form away, and beneath it lay a smaller form—the form of a boy. The father was dead but the son lived. The boy had not been stricken with the deathstroke, for the stout form of his parent had shielded him.

He was only stunted and cold. The men took up the dead and the living, and carried them to the dwelling of John de Castro.

The unfortunate peasant was laid away in the tomb by the side of his wife, and the boy found a home with the people of the court.

De Castro had one child—a daughter named Irene. She was nearly of the same age with Luigi Marino.

They were the only children in the count's dwelling, and spent much of their time together. Luigi loved the gentle girl because she was so good and kind, and because she was so beautiful—because she enlivened him with her merry laugh, and consoled him with her tender words.

And Irene loved the pale, dark-eyed boy. She loved him because his melancholy had enlisted her of the noble heart that beat in his young bosom. And so these two children learned to love—one of them the orphan of a peasant, and the other the heiress of Avella. But the noble count dreamed not of danger in their love. He was himself a generous man, and it pleased him to see his little daughter made happy in the companionship of one so near her own age; then the count was a kind-hearted man, and it gratified him to know that the boy was nobly grateful for the kindness that was shown him. The elder Marino had supplied De Castro's table with fruit—he had always received the bounty of the count, and hence the boy was not altogether a stranger in his new home.

A year passed away. Luigi had ceased to mourn for his parent, and much of his life was now sunshine and joy. He had learned much since he came beneath De Castro's roof, and his mind was fast expanding beyond the limits generally set by the age of boyhood. The count saw that the boy's soul was large, and that his mind was mature, and yet he did not think that the large soul and the matured mind would go beyond the thoughts of boyhood in love, for he still saw the two children wandering about together, and he seemed only to derive additional pleasure from their happiness.

In the great gallery, where were hung the paintings which the long line of the De Castros had been for years collecting, Luigi Marino used to wander. He loved to walk up and down the hall and gaze upon the pictures which hung there, and sometimes he would even forget that Irene bore him company.

"What makes you love these old pictures so?" asked Irene.

"Because they're such noble things," returned the boy, gazing upon a painted Titan.

"Some of them are pretty, I know," said the girl; "but surely there is nothing pretty about that great ugly man you are looking at now."

"There is something noble about it," resumed the boy, still gazing at the picture. "See those arms, those muscles, those eyes, those features. Oh, what a wonder!"

The boy soon turned away from the Titan, and taking the girl's hand within his own, he smiled. That made Irene happy, and she soon forgot that Luigi sometimes neglected her for the pictures.

Another year passed away, and during that time the Count de Castro looked little after Luigi Marino, save to see that he was well cared for, and that he made himself sometimes useful, the only manner of use ever required of him being to act as a sort of page about the person of the count when he was at home.

But John de Castro was not always to be blind, though it required other wit than his own to open his eyes.

His wife, the countess, was a weak, sickly woman, confined most of the time to her chamber.

She saw Luigi but seldom, but she saw her daughter much; and at length the idea stole into her mind that Irene cherished a dangerous attachment for the youth. With this thought forced upon her, she questioned her daughter. The gentle girl knew nothing of duplicity, she knew not how to deceive, and she confessed to her mother the truth. She wondered why her mother trembled, for she could not divine the cause.

She dreamed not that her love for young Marino could have caused the emotion. But the countess made no explanation.

She determined to trust the matter in the hands of her husband.

Luigi Marino was alone in the great picture gallery. He had grown much taller than when first he came to his present home, and he looked much older.

His face was still pale, but his black eye was as bright as fire. His hair was wavy in its jet gloss, and as it lay swept back over his shoulders, it formed an almost magic contrast with the pure whiteness of the white and expansive brow.

He stood gazing upon one of the paintings, when the Count de Castro entered the gallery.

The nobleman saw that his entrance had not been noticed, and he stood for some time and regarded the boy in silence. He was more than ever struck with the strange intelligence that beamed upon the lad's pale features, and while he stood there and watched him, he almost wished that Luigi were not the son of a peasant.

At length the boy noticed that his master was present, and with a trembling step he would have moved away, but De Castro called him back.

"Stop, Luigi," he said. "I have come up here to see you. I wish to speak with you."

The count was evidently embarrassed, and the boy noticed it. He had always felt pleased when his master spoke to him, but now something made him tremble. He saw in an instant that the count was not in the mood that usually marked his manner, and he feared that he had been guilty of some offence.

"Luigi," said the count, "I have been thinking that you had better leave this place—that you had better find some other home."

"Leave here, sir?" uttered the boy in painful accents. "Have I done wrong? Have I—"

"Stop, stop, Luigi. You have done nothing out of the way, but on the contrary, you have been very good and very kind. It is for your own welfare that I speak. You are old enough now to begin to see something of the world. Surely you would not wish to shut up here all your days."

"Oh, I should like to see the world, sir," returned the boy, with kindling enthusiasm.

"And at the same time be learning some trade or profession from the fruits of which you can sustain your manhood," added the count.

"Certainly, sir," said Luigi. "I do not wish to eat the bread of idleness."

"No, I suppose not. And now I wish to put you upon the track of an honest livelihood. I will see some good course for you to pursue."

"But I shall not go far off," said the boy. "I shall go somewhere from whence I can easily come back here sometimes."

The count bit his lips and looked down upon the floor.

"I don't know," he said, at length, as he raised his eyes to the boy's face. "It could do you no good to come back here."

Luigi Marino felt an impulse to tell how much of a home the palace had become to him, and how much attachment he felt for the scenes that clustered about him. But there was an expression in the count's face that arrested his speech. The boy had not studied the thousand painted countenances in that gallery for nothing. He had learned from them something of the art of reading thoughts from the looks of the face, and he at once saw that De Castro meant more than he said.

"I will do just as you please, sir," replied the boy, after a few moments' hesitation.

"Then I will make arrangements at once. To-morrow I will speak with you again. I shall have some point marked out by that time."

When Luigi was left alone, he was for a while almost stupefied by what he had heard; but gradually a dim light broke in upon him.

It was dim at first, but it soon became more apparent, and he felt assured that he had hit upon the truth.

The rest of the day he was very unhappy. He looked around for Irene, but could not find her.

Late in the evening, Luigi was upon the broad piazza that opened upon the garden. He leaned against one of the columns, and was buried in a wild sea of thought, when he was aroused by the fall of a light foot near him. He turned, and by the dim starlight he saw Irene.

As she came close to him and placed her hand upon his arm, he could see traces of tears upon her lovely face.

"Ah, Luigi," she said, "I was afraid I should not find you, that I should not see you again before you went away."

"Then you knew that I was going?" returned the youth; and he took Irene's hand within his own.

"Yes, and it has made me sad and unhappy."

"And do you know why I am going?" asked Luigi, in an earnest whisper.

"Yes, my mother told me all," returned the innocent girl, never dreaming that she was doing wrong to betray the secret.

"And why is it?"

"Do you not know, Luigi?"

"I think I know. I think it is because—because—"

"Because what?"

"Because I love you."

"Then you have thought rightly," said the girl, in a sobbing tone. "It is cruel—very cruel—to separate us thus, but I think my mother and father mean to do right. You will go to-morrow, so my father says. But you weep, Luigi."

"I cannot help it, Irene. But you are weeping too. Well, well, we must all weep when we are unhappy. I know that to-morrow I must go, but you will not entirely forget me, Irene. You will not forget the poor boy who has been made so happy in your society."

"Forget? Oh, never!"

"Never?" whispered Luigi. "Will you never forget me?"

"No, never," repeated the gentle girl.

"Ah, but your father will make you. I know what his thoughts and feelings are. I know how he looks upon me. To-day, when I saw him in the gallery, I read his whole thought in his face. He means that you shall forget me, Irene."

"How can he crush my memory? No, no, Luigi. I shall not forget you. We shall be older in time to come, and then we may meet again. Oh, be worthy of poor Irene, and trust the rest to God."

"Be worthy of thee!" repeated the youth. "When I am not, then let me die, for I should not wish to live."

"Hush! here comes my father. He may be searching for me."

"Then go to him. You will not see me again."

"Not to-night, but to-morrow."

"No, nor to-morrow—perhaps not for years. God keep you!"

Luigi Marino pressed the fair girl's hand to his lips, and then as he heard the count approaching, he glided away into the obscurity of the garden.

That night, when all was still and quiet about the palace, the peasant orphan arose from his bed and dressed himself.

He had determined that he would not see the count again.

He knew that De Castro had been ever kind to him, but yet he could not see him again. He was afraid the count would say something about Irene—that he might exact some promise, some pledge, that would for ever cut off all hope.

This whole matter had come so suddenly upon the boy that he had hardly time to consider upon it, but the little reflection he had given it caused him to act as he had.

He wished in his heart to take an affectionate farewell of his kind protector, to thank him for all his kindness; but he could not make up his mind to the task.

So he wrote a letter, in which he poured forth all his gratitude, and having folded it and superscribed it for the count, he placed it where it would be sure to be found.

As soon as this was done, Luigi made up a small bundle of clothing, and then having secured all the money of which he was possessed, amounting to some dozen sequins in gold, and a few pieces of silver, he glided from his room and noiselessly descended the stairs.

He did not stop till he had gained the road, and then he turned to take a last look at the place which had been to him so long a home.

There were tears in his eyes when he turned away for the last time, but his heart was strong. The world was all before him, and he had laid out a plan for the future.

It may have been a misty, dreamy thing, the boy's plan, but yet there was enough of substance to it to serve him as a guide.

Before morning, the boy had reached the fertile valley west of the Apennines.

Six years rolled away, and six years of change had come upon the affairs of Italy.

In one of the dark, cold prisons of Rome sat John de Castro, Count of Avella. He had been convicted of rebellion against the Holy See, and though he had stoutly asserted his innocence, yet he had been cruelly imprisoned.

He was now pale and wan, for he sickened beneath the noisome vapours of the prison-house, and the death-doom which hung over him damped his spirits and crushed his mental energies.

Sometimes the gentle Irene came to visit him, but she came but seldom, and her visits were short, for the prison-keeper dared not grant too much favour to his prisoner.

Irene was still beautiful, though melancholy made her pensive and sad.

There was little bloom upon her cheeks, and the light of her eyes was somewhat dimmed. It was the calm, holy resignation, the gleaming of her perfect purity, and the soft smile of the Christian that made her beautiful.

One day she sat by her father's side in the cold dungeon. She did not weep, for she had come to try to comfort her father, and she had gained the mastery over the tears that dwelt in her heart.

"Alas, my child," groaned the old man, "it is not death I fear, for death would be welcome. Your mother has faded away from earth, and I know she is now in heaven. If I were to die, I should not fear being separated from her. But it is to leave you that weighs heavy upon my mind."

"Let not that trouble you," said the faithful girl. "It is hard to think of death—to think of death in such a shape as this; but if you must think of it, let no thoughts of earth weigh you down. Look up, look up to God, and dwell in hope."

"Oh, my child," uttered the count, as he placed his manacled arms upon her shoulder and drew her upon

his bosom, "I know how pure is your soul, and I know how holy are your blessed consolations, but yet I cannot think of death without weeping to think of leaving thee. Even this cold dungeon seems a palace when you are here. Oh, I hope God will bless you for all your kindness to your poor, suffering father!"

The count's face grew dark with painful thought as he ceased speaking, and his frame shuddered.

"You must not be moved so!" faintly urged Irene.

"Oh, my child, you know not what it is that moves me. Alas, alas! this may be the last of our meeting on earth. In one short week there is to be a fearful thinning of the prisoners here, and I am to be among the number. Oh, heaven have mercy! Pray for me, my daughter!"

The poor girl could hold back her tears no longer. She wept long and bitterly.

She tried to speak, but before the words came to her lips, the gaoler came in and bade her prepare to depart.

There was one more embrace, one more kiss, a short, fervent prayer, and then the father and child were separated.

It was nearly dusk.

In a small room in an upper story of a house in one of the out-of-the-way streets of Rome stood a young man. He was tall and slim, and his face was very pale. One would hardly recognize in the form of that man the Luigi Marino of boyhood; but he it was.

The dark masses of hair hung carelessly down over his shoulders, and the large black eyes were brilliant as ever.

All around him were the implements of the painter, and the walls were covered with anatomical sketches and drawings.

He still held the palette and brushes in his hand, and before him stood a large canvas, upon which he had been painting.

The canvas was very large, for its top reached nearly to the ceiling, and near at hand stood a stepladder upon which the painter must have stood to command a sweep of his work.

Presently there came a slight knocking at the door, but the painter did not hear it. The knocking was louder, but still he moved not. In a moment more the door was opened, and an old woman entered.

"Now, good master Marino, have done with moping here and eat something. Thy face is grown as sharp as a vulture's beak."

Luigi turned upon the woman, and a faint smile broke over his features.

"It is finished, Maud," he said. "My work is done. I will eat now to the heart's content."

As he spoke, he moved aside to allow the woman to come up.

The woman advanced and gazed upon the picture.

She stood for some moments completely awe-struck.

"Poor man," she at length murmured, at the same time wiping her eyes. "Oh, what torture, what agony."

"Then you think it truthful," said Luigi, not a little flattered by the emotions of his kind old hostess.

"It is too truthful," said Maud. "It is terrible. I should never sleep if that was in my room."

The young painter smiled again, and then he laid away his palette and brushes. He breathed a long breath, when he turned again towards his picture, and a shade of pain swept across his features.

"I may fail," he murmured to himself.

Maud did not hear him, and when she had gazed upon the canvas long enough, she bade the young man come and eat.

It was on the evening of the next day that Luigi Marino was again in his studio; but now there were two men with him—one of them a priest, and the other a soldier.

"You are sure you can gain admittance there," said the painter, in a doubtful tone.

"Certainly," replied the priest. "I can pass into the Vatican, and the keeper of the great gallery will let me into his presence. The place is open since yesterday, and several paintings have already been carried in."

"Ah," uttered Luigi, "and has judgment been passed on them?"

"No. His holiness has not even seen them. He goes to-morrow to the Museum."

"And my painting shall be there?"

"Yes."

"Then be sure that it is in a good light. Place it as I have directed."

"And I think you will gain all you could ask," added the priest, as he looked again upon the picture, which was barely distinguishable in the light of the lamp.

The painter again shook his head in a painful mood, but he did not speak. He drew a strong curtain

securely over the painting, and then he gave it up to the two men whom he had hired to help him.

"Now, where is this marvellous painter?" cried Innocent X., as he stood in the museum gallery of the Vatican, and gazed upon a picture which stood before him.

It was the Martyrdom of Saint Peter of Alexandria which had afforded the painter a subject, and he had handled his theme with a magic pencil. The fearful death-struggle of the Alexandrian bishop was laid upon the canvas with almost life, and even the dying groan seemed issuing from the convulsed lips.

"Where is he?" cried the pope. "He has done us pleasure here."

An usher led forward Luigi Marino. The painter fell upon his knees before the pope, and when he rose, he looked paler than before, but there was no trembling, save a slight quivering of the nether lip.

"Didst thou paint this?" asked the pope, looking first upon the picture, and then upon the pale youth, who stood before him.

"Yes, holy father," returned Luigi.

"Then thou hast done most nobly. We award thee the palm of excellence, and thy picture must not leave our palace. Our purse shall be opened wide for thine effort. Name thy price."

The painter saw that the pope was in a good humour— that his admiration was excited—and he spoke boldly.

"I do not ask for money," he said. "I have toiled without ceasing—but 'twas not for money. I have beguiled some moments in trifling pictures which have brought me the means of sustaining life; and this work I held above the dross of earth."

"Well, speak on," said the pope, as he looked curiously in the face of the painter. "Your words have a strange beginning. We want the picture, so thou hadst better not set thy price too high. Come, tell us to us thy wishes."

"Holy father," commenced the young painter, in a low, earnest tone, "many years ago I was a poor boy in great distress. My father was killed by a sweeping torrent from the Apennines, while I was in his arms. His corpse shielded me, and I was found by a noble generous man, who took me to his home. That man owed me nothing, and yet he became my protector. He reared me in early life, and taught me the path of virtue. All that I am, all that I have that is good on earth, I owe to that man. He is now in tribulation and in danger, and I would save him. Oh, I hope my gratitude may reach him!"

"Who is the man?"

"John de Castro."

A dark shadow flitted across the aged features of the pope.

"Do you know," he said, looking sternly upon the painter, "that by such a request you endanger your own life?"

"Yes, I know it full well. But what is gratitude worth if it would stop at such a danger?"

"And so you would have us barter away our solemn decrees for thy painting? Thou must have a wonderful boldness."

"No, no, holy father, you mistake me. This painting is but a type of my gratitude. I give it to thee as a pledge of my devotion to one who has been my friend when all else was dark. I look to thy forgiveness for my suit. I came to appeal to thy mercy. This work of my hands is but an introduction of my prayer, and to thine apostolic clemency I make that prayer. Take my picture, listen to my prayer, and give life and liberty to De Castro."

The pope's countenance was softened. He looked again upon the picture, and then once more he turned his gaze upon the painter.

"It is a wonderful picture," he said, "and thou art a wonderful child. You shall hear from us again."

The pope waved his hand as he spoke, his attendants gathered about him, and he soon left the spot.

"Now, good Master Marino," cried old Maud, hastening into the painter's room, "bestir thyself, for there's a messenger from the pope waiting to see thee. Does think it means thee good or evil?"

"I know not," uttered Luigi, trembling with conflicting emotions.

"The Lord grant that they be good!" ejaculated the woman, as Luigi turned from the room.

The painter mentally responded to the prayer, but did not speak aloud. At the door he found the messenger, but he would answer no questions. He only bade the painter follow him.

Luigi put on his cloak and cap, and with a strangely beating heart he stepped out into the street. For some time he followed his guide, and at length they stopped at the door of a dwelling on the Corso.

"Now, sir painter, rap at this door and await the result," said the messenger; "and in the meantime put this paper away to look at when convenient."

Luigi took the paper, and the next moment he was alone. He rapped at the door. It was opened by a

stranger, and he was bade to enter. He was conducted into a richly furnished apartment, where he was met by one who extended a trembling hand for him to grasp.

"Luigi—my saviour—"

The painter looked up, and he knew that the man whose hand he grasped was John de Castro. The poor nobleman was sadly changed, but his countenance was not to be mistaken.

"My noble, generous preserver," cried the count, while the tears trickled down his pallid cheeks, "tell me how I shall bless thee for this?"

Marino could not speak. He felt a warm hand upon his neck, and he heard another voice pronounce his name. He turned and saw the angelic features of Irene.

"Luigi," she murmured, "you have made a heaven for poor Irene."

Luigi Marino was all bewilderment. He had a faint glimmering of the truth, but the scene came so powerfully upon him, that it took some moments for him to shake off the stunning effects of the joyous blow.

"And are you saved?" he at length asked, gazing into the count's face.

"Yes, yes, noble boy. The pope has pardoned me, and he has told me all."

The painter sank down into a chair, and Irene was resting on his bosom. His prayer of months was answered, and the fruition was present with him.

Half an hour afterwards he thought of the paper he had received from the messenger. He took it from his pocket, and read as follows:

"Your prayer is granted. It was not your picture that triumphed over our heart, but we were moved by your gratitude. INNOCENT."

"You will leave us no more?" said the count after he had seen the pope's note.

Luigi cast his eyes upon Irene.

"Oh, I can be grateful, Luigi," cried De Castro, noticing the look of his young preserver. "I know where your heart is. Here, this is yours—take it with my blessing. But she must not leave her father."

The count placed Irene's hand within that of Luigi as he spoke, and then he sat down and gazed upon the happiness he had made.

The beautiful girl wound her arms about the neck of her noble lover, and she was not long in making him promise that he would leave them no more.

Luigi and Irene were married in Rome, but John de Castro deemed it not prudent to remain there long. Innocent X. had many excellent qualities, but his foibles were numerous, and the count had no desire to remain too near the vacillating pontiff.

De Castro went to Aquila, and having sold his estates he passed on to Venice, where he found a home. Luigi and Irene went with him, and in their sweet companionship, he found a bright and holy light to illumine the path of his declining years.

"The Martyrdom of Saint Peter of Alexandria" is still in the Vatican at Rome, but the rest of Marino's paintings are in Venice, where he found the home of his honourable and happy manhood, and where he made himself beloved by all who knew him.

A. C. B.

A POSTAL SQUABBLE.—A very pretty quarrel has arisen between the Postmaster-General and the South Australians. The *causa beli* is rather complicated, originating, as far as we can make out, in a contract into which Lord Stanley, of Alderley, has entered with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company on behalf of New South Wales, New Zealand, and South Australia, without consulting the wishes or the interests of the latter colony. The South Australians complain that the Peninsular and Oriental Steamers are abominably slow, and never keep their time, and insist that their letters shall be delivered at Kangaroo Island, which causes a deviation of about one hundred miles from the direct route to Victoria. But Lord Stanley is unwilling that this deviation should be made, and has arranged that the South Australian mails shall be deposited in St. George's Sound at the P. and O.'s coaling station, near Cape Leewin, a thousand miles from Adelaide, and that the South Australians shall send thither to fetch them at their own expense and risk. The Postmaster-General threatens that, if his proposal is not accepted, the postage of letters to and from South Australia shall be raised to three shillings an ounce, with the further menace that it will in all probability be raised still higher, and that he may even give orders "that at no rate of postage shall any letters for South Australia, except official dispatches, be sent by the mail packet." As might have been anticipated, language of this kind has not acted like oil on the South Australian waves, and the Adelaide House of Assembly has come to some very strong resolutions

on the subject. The Peninsular and Oriental steamers are so justly in disfavour with all the Australian colonies that the South Australians will probably be cordially backed up in their resistance to Lord Stanley's edicts, the more especially as the French postal steamers come right up to Galie, and will be only too ready to accept any contracts which the colonies may offer them.

TEMPERAMENT.

Nay, your very hair when mixed is of one hue.

Browning.

"Ada, I did not think it possible for you to be so cruel."

Ada Brainard glanced up into Lloyd Golding's face and smiled; and considering how distressed and agitated he looked, her appearance did seem very cold and cruel, indeed. Her eyes, blue and sunny, met with smiling unconcern the pain in the dark depths of his. After a moment she said:

"What reason had you, Lloyd, for believing that I could not be cruel?"

"You look so gentle, so kind," he began.

"I am kind," she answered.

"Not to me."

"Yes, to you."

"But Ada!"

"Well?"

"I love you?"

"You are mistaken," so coldly that Golding was betrayed into saying, haughtily:

"I beg your pardon."

Ada turned, hastily.

"Don't let us quarrel, Lloyd. See here! I'll be frank with you. I like you, I do like you, but I don't love you. I like to be with you, I like to look at your face, your presence is agreeable to me; and I've shown you this frankly. I meant nothing more, and I really don't think, Lloyd, that you love me."

"But, Ada—"

"I know you think you do, and it wouldn't take a great deal to make me believe that I loved you, yet I know—I honestly know that I do not, and never could."

The last part of her speech was what affected Golding. He turned very pale. For a moment he was silent; then he said, with an effort:

"There is no reason why you should love me, I know. I am poor, plain and unattractive, compared to the gay fellows who frequent here. As my wife you would not have so luxurious a home as this is. I have been presumptuous to suppose—" He rose to his feet, choked by some emotion.

Ada caught his hands and interposed:

"Lloyd, wait, listen. If my heart told me I loved you, none of these things would come into my thoughts. Be sure of that, for I am capable of love, unlike it as I seem to you. But as it is, I acknowledge that I do think of your comfortable but plain country house, with no society but your invalid mother; and though I have an affection for you—call it what you please—for you, I cannot make up my mind to share your life. If you were wealthy, and had attractions beside those to offer me, I might yield to you; but as it is, you must not urge me."

"And you call this love?" exclaimed Golding scornfully.

"No, I do not, Lloyd; that is just it. What I call love is to care so much for you that I should care for nothing else."

Speaking and looking earnestly—being as beautiful as an angel—she stood before Lloyd Golding, and an impulse, rash, desperate, passionate, to snatch her from her place and bear her to the ends of the earth—having as vague an idea as most people where that might be rushed through him.

But, pressing his lips hard together, he turned away slowly, saying:

"I suppose there is nothing left for me, then, but to go home."

"And to believe that we are still friends, and that I like you better than any of the 'gay fellows' who come here." They bore me sometimes; you never do."

There was a fascination for Golding in every atom of that radiant figure.

As she spoke, he held his hat, forgetting to open the door, gazing in a rapt way at the fair face in its frame of gold hair, and at the fall of soft blue drapery.

"How can I give her up?" he thought.

And as if something of the same feeling was in her heart, she slipped her hand into his, saying:

"I wish you wouldn't stand there and look so earnest, and strong, and good, Lloyd; you'll overpersuade me in spite of myself."

She laughed, and he watched her, never taking his eyes off the pink dimples in her soft cheeks.

"Can such a homely fellow as I look attractive to

you, Ada?" he said, slowly, still under the spell of her charming face.

"You know you can, Lloyd. If I was a man I should want to be just such a dark, earnest, grand one as you are. Then I suppose I should be falling in love with every blue-eyed, will-o'-the-wisp girl that I met," answered Ada, unconscious that she had touched the very point of their mutual attractiveness.

He lifted her hand, looking admiringly at its rosy fairness and exquisite proportions, raised it to his lips—then dropped it and turned away, startled a little by his involuntary act.

But Ada was not pleased. She followed him to the door, laughingly bidding him good-by, and making him promise to come again.

As he rode home that afternoon, he looked with gloomy abstracted eyes at the swiftly passing woods and fields, half unconsciously trying to throw off his mingled sensations as if their existence was some mistake.

As he neared the village, and he saw the little red farm-house which was his happy home, he murmured:

"I don't know what I should do with Ada there. I am sure—and yet she is so pretty, so pretty! I would go to the end of the world to-night for the sake of having her mine."

The train stopped, and he sprang out upon the platform of the station.

It was half-a-mile's walk back to the house, and all the way was lined with blossoming apple-trees; a broad, brown road with the busy robins skimming down its length, and the deep sky stretching overhead, while the cool wind was sweet with the apple-blooms.

A sense of exquisite enjoyment came over him; he lingered on his way, looking along the wood's edge for wild flowers, and searching in the hollows of the fields for mosses, as he had done when a boy, until the sun began to set.

"I must go home," he said; and with his hat in his hand, full of flowers and mosses, he went home, bareheaded, the free wind blowing back his hair, and buffeting him in soft gusts, so that he walked against it with an effort, laughing a little, happy at heart in spite of Ada Brainard's forbidden blonde beauty.

Mounting the hillock, the gold of the western sky pressed near.

His dark eyes grew grave in their depths—yet the same happy smile flickered about his mouth as he gazed.

During the next dozen steps he enjoyed a happiness equalled by no other; then the red walls of his home shut out the eternal glory. He swung open the garden gate, and went into the house, singing softly:

Beautiful city that I love.

He went into the familiar sitting-room. His mother's chair by the hearth was empty. He looked startled as he put down his flowers, but, as he turned, a young girl entered the room, saying:

"Your mother has lain down, Lloyd; she isn't as well to-day."

"Is she asleep, Maggie?" he asked, looking wistfully towards the door of his mother's bedroom.

"Yes. Don't go in now. Wild flowers! Oh, Lloyd, how sweet!"

"Take care of them, Maggie. I knew you would like them."

A few days later and Mrs. Golding was declared to be very ill, and it was very little later before they knew that she would never again be well.

The shock made a great gap in Lloyd Golding's life; but his mother lingered through the summer months—the rich summer months in which he saw in a strange, dreary way the roses blossom and fall, and the golden red and purple asters cover the meadows and fields.

Few mothers win such love as Mrs. Golding had won—few mothers have such sons as was Lloyd Golding.

It was all over at last! He had known it must be, for a long time, yet he was unconscious how hard his heart had been strained for months, until the evening after her burial, it broke in tears.

"Oh, mother, mother!"

The cry came through hard sobs. No one heard it. He was secure from intrusion, locked in his mother's bedroom—the dear, sacred room where she had died.

Like the child that he was at heart, he had flung himself down beside the bed, his face buried in the pillow where the loved head had lain in its dying hours, and his tears and passionate prayers were sacred to Maggie Maples.

She heard one heavy sob as she passed the door on her way to her little room. The house had been her home for five years.

She was a quiet little thing. No one thought of her when the death occurred—she was only Mrs. Golding's little maid-servant, and no one at the funeral heard her speak at all.

She climbed the steep, farm-house stairs, and closed the door of her chamber.

Mrs. Golding had been very kind to her; the little shelf above the bed was piled with the books she had given her, and all the trifles around the room spoke of her generous hand.

The weary little orphan girl lay down upon her white bed, in the dark, and shed her quiet, unsuspected tears of grief.

Then she prayed that God would take care of her—for what should she do, where should she go, now her good friend had gone?

A soft September rain beat on the shingles overhead. She listened in a half awake vision—for in spite of sorrow and loneliness the sound was one of cheer. It seemed to murmur peace to her sad, young heart until she fell asleep.

The next morning there was work to be done in the fields by Lloyd Golding, pale and heavy-eyed though he was with the night's sad watching.

While upon one side was heaven's bereavement, upon the other was its bounty; the apples lay ripe upon the sward—the grain stood unstacked in the field.

When the day's work was finished, Lloyd Golding came slowly homeward. At the gate stood a little figure, trying to smile with pale lips. It was Maggie.

"I waited until you came, Lloyd, to say good-by," she said.

He paused, surprised.

"Why? where are you going, Maggie?"

"Away to London. Mrs. Harding called to-day, and said I could go to her."

Lloyd seemed stupefied.

"Besides, you know that I can't stay here now," added Maggie.

"Why? Oh, I know. But—Maggie, will you like to go. Will it be better than staying here, if you could stay?"

"No," simply. "But I can't think of that now. Good-by, Lloyd."

"Maggie, I can't lose you, too. Little Maggie," looking with sad wonder at the sweet, young face; "why, I can't do without you, child. You *mustn't* go."

A slow red dawned in the young man's cheek as he comprehended his heart. He took the satchel from the little hand and drew the girl towards him.

"No, no, Maggie—you, all that is left of the dear old days—do you think I shall let you go? You know me; you have been as a little sister; now will you be my wife? Then you can stay with me—for I never can let you go!" and the passionate tears came into his sad eyes. "You will not go?"

"No."

A spring day two years later. The lilacs were banked against the sitting-room windows of the red farm-house, and all in a flush of purple bloom. A little child stood upon a chair at the window, steadied in its place by the hand of its young mother. Maggie Golding and her baby were watching for "papa's" coming.

Maggie Golding looked very pretty at her watching. Her face had grown rosily dimpled and smiling in the last two years.

Her hair was fair like the little child's, but her eyes were blue, while the boy had the neutral grey of his father's, black-lashed and steadfast.

A proud, sturdy cherub he was, pressing his cheek to the pane, cooing and murmuring at the lilacs, and suddenly breaking into a great shout as Golding came up the hillock.

As the young man entered the door, his eyes met his wife's with the look one can never give unless he loves and is loved intensely.

"You are late, Lloyd."

He took the child from the chair and kissed him.

"Yes, dear; I went to the post-office. And I found there a paper containing the marriage of a friend of mine, Ada Brainard, to a Mr. Hews."

The blue eyes went up to Golding's face, but he was fondling the child happily, and did not see the wistfulness of the glance.

"Miss Brainard? Wasn't she an old love of yours, Lloyd?"

"She was a charming girl, Maggie, but I never loved anybody but you. She used to attract me, but it was a matter of temperament, I think."

E. S. K.

THE famous St. Giles's Hill cheese and horse fair, near Winchester, which has been held annually in September for 700 years, will cease to be held after the present year.

To those who rave against English red-tape and fancy things are constantly done better in France, the following will be instructive—Three years since a proprietor of an estate situated on the borders of the sea, thinking that in the growing dearth of the dear oyster it would be a profitable speculation to himself

and a blessing to man if he increased the number of oysters in the world, asked permission to erect on his own property on the foreshore of the sea an oyster-bed. He has applied in vain for a reply, and now, at the expiration of the third year, understands that the application has to pass through the office of the Minister of France, after having gone through six offices, and been subject to twenty-one reports. No wonder that oysters are dear.

TEMPTATION.

By J. F. SMITH,

Author of "The Will and the Way," "Woman and her Master," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Lands mortgaged may return, and more esteem'd,
But honesty once pawned, is ne'er redeemed.

Middleton.

"HAVE you succeeded?" inquired the lawyer, with a friendly smile, as he entered the private office, where the interview between his client and Miles had taken place.

"Not yet!" was the reply.

"Perhaps you had better trust the affair into my hands," suggested Mr. Foster; "by employing the police, we shall soon obtain some trace of the man you seek!"

"No—no!" interrupted the woman, hastily; "it would place him on his guard! Once alarmed, he might find means to quit the country! He has long been at war with justice! By-the-by," she added, with the air of a person who suddenly recollects some circumstance of trivial importance, "in looking over my grandfather's papers, I discovered a handbill in which your name is mentioned!"

"Mine!"

His client laid before him the paper describing the disappearance of George Maitland, offering a reward for any intelligence which might lead to his discovery, and referring parties to Mr. Foster, Solicitor, Inner Temple.

"It was connected," said the lawyer, "with one of the most extraordinary affairs in which I have ever been engaged!"

"Am I too curious in asking the nature of it?"

"Certainly not!" replied the gentleman, little dreaming that she had any motive stronger than curiosity for her question.

He at once proceeded to relate to her the visit of George Maitland to his friend Edward Trevanian—his quitting Farnsfield, and his mysterious disappearance in London.

"Strange!" said Martha. "Did you never discover any clue?"

"Not the least!"

"Was he married?" she added.

Mr. Foster replied in the negative, and added, that his family had long since given up all hope of ascertaining his fate.

"Trevanian!" repeated Martha, half aloud; "I have certainly heard that name before!"

"Not unlikely!" observed the lawyer; "Sir Richard Trevanian is one of the eldest baronets in the kingdom!"

"Had he any interest in—"

"You have suggested a question," replied Mr. Foster, "which I have asked myself a hundred times! Strange that the same idea should have struck us both! Interest at the time of George Maitland's disappearance he certainly had not; besides, he is a man of unblemished reputation. It would be unjust to suspect him!"

His client smiled. Her grandfather's papers had given her much better data for forming a correct judgment of the baronet's real character than the speaker possessed. Shortly afterwards she took her leave.

Brief and apparently unimportant as had been their conversation on the subject, the man of law could not dismiss it from his mind. He could not comprehend how his client had jumped to a conclusion which had more than once forced itself upon his own mind.

"Had she been aware of the will?" he thought, "I could understand it!"

Martha was not aware of the will; but she had read the private memoranda of Peter Quin.

Sir Richard and his family still continued to reside at the Hall. His son had just been gazetted to a cornetcy in the Guards—one of those fashionable, crack regiments, as they are termed, in which dissipation and folly run the race of ruin: the promising youth was about to leave home to join. His father was to accompany him to London, to introduce his heir to the world.

The family were seated at the breakfast-table, when the butler brought in the letter-bag from the village post-office. One letter particularly excited the baronet's

attention—it was sealed with black. He immediately broke the seal.

"No ill news, I hope!" observed her ladyship.

"You shall hear!" replied her husband, reading aloud:—"Brierly Grange, September the twenty-fourth. Honoured Sir,—It is my painful duty to inform you that your cousin, Sir John Mordaunt, expired last night. Every search has been made, but no will has been found. The general impression is, that he died intestate. As no arrangements for the funeral can take place till your arrival, I trust soon to have the pleasure of seeing you here."

"Yours, very respectfully,

"JOHN MORTLOCK, Steward."

"What a bore!" exclaimed Walter Trevanian; "just at this time!"

His mother smiled. She did not think the prospect of an additional eight thousand a-year merited the application her son bestowed.

"You are so impatient!" she said.

"Has the old fool left us anything, then?" demanded the young man.

"You hear," answered his father, gravely, "that Sir John died intestate! If so, in all probability I am his next heir!"

"Probability!" repeated the youth.

"I must start for Berkshire instantly!" continued the baronet; "such interests ought not to be trifled with! It will only delay your journey three or four days," he added; "or, if you prefer it, you can accompany me!"

Walter Trevanian did prefer it. He was tired of home—for his naturally selfish heart was a stranger to the affections and ties which ought to have hallowed it.

Here it may be as well to explain what his father meant when he said that in all probability he was his cousin's heir. The late Sir John Mordaunt had an only son, who had married a person of humble birth and doubtful reputation—in his indignation he had discarded him: the young man died shortly afterwards, leaving a widow and son totally unprovided for; but so many years had elapsed since they had been heard of, that it was more than doubtful whether they still existed.

Most fervently Sir Richard Trevanian hoped they did not—it would have been eight thousand a-year out of his pocket.

That same day, accompanied by his son, he started for the Grange, mentally calculating during the journey his chances of the rich succession—to the importance of which Walter was now full alive.

On their arrival at the house, the air of respect and deference with which the steward, lawyer, and domestics of the deceased received them, confirmed their hopes that nothing had been heard of the heir; still they would have given something to have possessed a certificate of his death.

Had Peter Quin been still living, perhaps the accommodating agent might have procured them one.

After a hasty dinner, the party adjourned to the library.

"A sad affair!" replied the steward; "so sudden!"

"Very, Mortlock!" replied Sir Richard Trevanian, trying to look grave.

Walter yawned: he was impatient to join his regiment—to sport his dashing uniform—to indulge in a wider field the vices which had procured him no very enviable reputation at Farnsfield. The prospect of the inheritance scarcely compensated for the delay.

"Most unpardonable thing, in Sir John!" said the lawyer—who had long been in the interests of the expectant cousin—"to leave his affairs in such confusion!"

It was suggested that the estates were entailed.

"But not the personal property!" continued the man of law—which amounts to a hundred thousand pounds, at least! But the first thing is to arrange respecting the funeral!"

"I think, gentlemen," exclaimed a voice near them, "I can spare you that trouble!"

They looked up: during their conversation, a stranger, followed by the housekeeper and the valet of the late baronet, had entered the room. He was a tall, resolute-looking man, apparently about thirty or thirty-two years of age; if his appearance was not altogether gentlemanly, it was striking—one of those faces which, once seen, are not easily forgotten; he had an eye like a vulture's, raven hair, and might have been considered handsome, but for a bitter, sarcastic expression about the mouth.

"And pray, sir who are you?" demanded the baronet, haughtily.

"Your cousin, Sir John Mordaunt!" replied the stranger, with a smile—at the same time extending his hand to welcome him.

"What! you won't take it?" he said—seeing Sir Richard draw back; "as you please—your displeasure, after all, is very natural!"

"I do not understand you, sir!"

"I perfectly understand you, Sir Richard? For

years you have calculated on being my grandfather's heir—the intention, no doubt, was praiseworthy—to accomplish which, you left no means untried to keep alive his anger against his son, who had offended him—not hesitating even to slander the dead!"

"Infamous!" exclaimed the baronet.

"Exactly what I think of it!" was the cool rejoinder.

"You must retract this calumny, or——"

"Prove it!" said the stranger; "it is only just I should do so! Well, then, Sir Richard—thanks to the fidelity of these attached servants of my family—your numerous letters to my grandfather are in my possession. I am in a position, also, to prove the nature of the affectionate inquiries you made after me, through the agency of one Peter Quin. As to my own identity," he added, "that cannot be disputed! This woman," pointing to the housekeeper, "was present at my birth! The valet has known me from childhood!"

Both the domestics declared that from the time of his birth a greater period than a year had never passed without their seeing him.

The identity of the heir was therefore complete.

Sir Richard Trevanian reflected for a few moments: the inheritance he had intrusted for evidently had escaped him. It remained with himself whether he was to suffer in reputation as well as in fortune. By an act of graceful recognition he might avoid the latter disgrace. His mind was quickly made up—he extended his hand frankly.

"Welcome, Sir John Mordaunt," he said, "to the home of your ancestors! I at once admit your claims! Let the past be forgotten!"

"Willingly!" replied his cousin; "I have no wish to rake up old grievances! No one desires more ardently than myself that the past should be forgotten! The page is a painful one!"

The tone in which these words were uttered proved to the baronet that the speaker was sincere. He gazed upon him with a mingled sensation of fear and respect: the man who could baffle him must possess no ordinary energies.

One circumstance puzzled him more than all the rest. He could not comprehend how he had become acquainted with his transactions with Peter Quin, whom he vainly imagined he had deceived as to his real name and quality.

He mentally resolved, on his arrival in London, to see the agent, and discover, if possible, a clue to the mystery.

He had yet to learn that the unscrupulous instrument of his villainies was dead.

To his surprise, he discovered that his cousin was a man of the world, equally ready for attack as defense—close as a tombstone on the events of his past life—the point Sir Richard so ardently desired to arrive at.

"I always imagined," he said, "that you had died abroad!"

"It was so given out, I believe!" replied his cousin, carelessly.

"Then you have never been on the Continent?"

"Occasionally."

"Married, I presume?"

"No!" replied Sir John; "and most probably never shall be! In which case I need not remind you that you are my heir!"

Sir Richard Trevanian looked as if he considered the chance but a poor compensation for the loss of eight thousand a-year.

Although politely pressed to remain for the funeral, he declined, pleading as an excuse the necessity of his son's immediately joining his regiment. The following day he took his departure for London.

"Go!" muttered the new baronet, as he saw him drive from the Grange; "a blacker villain never darkened the doors of an honest man! A villain without temptation, too! Hanger never pressed him—he never knew what it was to pace the streets without a shelter to fly to—the hounds of justice on his track! But I have baffled them at last!" he added; "at last! The prize has been worth suffering and sinning for!"

Immediately after the funeral of his grandfather, the owner of Brierly Grange pensioned off all the old servants, except the housekeeper and valet—those he retained; the latter he named steward, in the place of John Mortlock, who had for so many years been in the confidence of his disappointed cousin.

When the neighbouring gentry called to condole with him on his loss, they thought it somewhat singular that Sir John Mordaunt never returned their visits, or received them personally: the excuse was, either that he was indisposed or engaged.

Strange that a man who had just succeeded to a baronetcy and eight thousand a year should thus exclude himself from the world.

They were still more surprised when, after a sufficient time had elapsed for him to settle his affairs, they heard that he had taken his departure for Italy, and that Brierly Grange was to let for a term of years.

Some time elapsed before any notice was taken of the advertisements; and the housekeeper began to fear that the place would remain all the winter without a tenant, when, one morning, a plain but handsome carriage, without any armorial bearings, drove up to the principal entrance.

A lady wished to see the house.

Mrs. Everett—the name of the housekeeper—conducted her through all the principal rooms, explained the convenience of arrangement, extolled the prospects, southern aspect, and healthiness of the situation. The fact was, the garrulous old woman began to feel tired of living alone.

Instead of inquiring about the house, to her astonishment the visitor began questioning her most particularly respecting its owner.

Was Sir John Mordaunt young? Dark or fair? Likely to remain long abroad? The female cicerone demanded nothing better than to reply to her. It was so long since she had found occasion to use her tongue, that the opportunity was a relief to her.

The marriage of the late baronet's son, and his banishment from the paternal mansion, were freely related; but when the curious visitor began to inquire how the present one had passed his youth and riper years, either the prudence or the fidelity of the faithful domestic took the alarm.

She could inform her nothing upon that point—absolutely nothing.

"There appears a degree of romance in his history," observed the lady, "which has interested me! Is there a portrait of him in the house?"

A dry negative was the reply of Mrs. Everett.

"He must have suffered greatly!"

The housekeeper thought he had, but knew nothing positive upon the subject.

By this time they had reached the picture-gallery—hung with the portraits of the Mordaunts for many generations. They were an ancient family, and had evidently taken considerable pride in the collection—which connealed with several Holbeins—warriors and dames who had flourished in the courts of Henry VII. and his profligate successor; there were a succession of beauties, who had sat to Lely, Gainsborough, and Reynolds, down to the portrait of the last Lady Mordaunt, by Lawrence—one of his earliest and most graceful pictures.

All were carelessly glanced over in their turn, as the housekeeper enumerated the names and titles. At last they came to a frame from which the canvas had been removed.

"Whose portrait should be there?" inquired the lady?

"The father of the present baronet!"

"Could she see it?"

Mrs. Everett led the way to her own room, forgetting, in her anxiety to oblige her visitor, that it was so like his son, it might pass for him.

No sooner did the stranger fix her eyes upon it, than a smile of satisfaction rested for an instant upon her features. She contemplated it closely, turned away, and then went back to examine it again.

"Who has the letting of the house?" she demanded.

"The steward, madam."

"Do you know the terms?"

"No."

"No matter!" replied the singular woman; "whatever they are, I agree to them! From this very day I am the tenant of Brierly Grange! Tell the steward to write to my lawyer, Mr. Foster, of the Inner Temple—he will arrange the details!"

"What name?" said the astonished housekeeper, as she preceded the speaker to her carriage.

The lady gave her card as she drove off.

Miss Mendez was the name, engraved in small old English letters, upon it.

Our readers have not forgotten that Martha Quin, by the will of her mother, was to assume the name of Mendez.

The season at His Majesty's Theatre promised to be unusually brilliant. The short-lived peace which was just concluded permitted several of the great artistes of Italy—hitherto known to us by reputation only—to visit the metropolis of England, and exchange their foreign notes for British bullion.

The fashionable world was in a state of unswayed excitement. Peeresses intrigued for boxes in the royal circle with as much perseverance as their lords and masters did for the honours of the state. A new mania like an epidemic had set in, and the symptoms were most violent.

Music, which is gradually becoming a taste amongst us, was then merely a rage. Many who affected the air of connoisseurship and raved about the opera in reality were attracted only by the ballet—they could understand that. The director knew his real interests, and catered accordingly.

We often complain of the corrupt days of the Regency of George IV. We question whether the tone of morality—especially in the theatrical world—has

improved since then. Managers did not brave public opinion by announcing that their theatres were under the direction of their mistresses—the engagement of an actress or dancer did not depend on her having a friend who would take a private box for the season. It was left to the cynicism of the present day to tolerate such scandals.

The stage! How quickly the illusion vanishes with those who, misled by the false glitter of the scene, poetical temperament, vanity, or a love of Shakespeare, embark youth, talent and reputation on its deceitful promises—for one that succeeds a hundred are shipwrecked. It is like a sea whose waters flow only in one direction—from the shore. There is no returning tide; those who would escape the current must brave it manfully.

To the artificial atmosphere of the Opera House Fauny was led, not by taste or ambition—she was too young to entertain such feelings—but by the iron hand of necessity. The change appeared to her like fairy-land; the blaze of light, the rich dresses, the troupe of *figurantes*—all older than herself, who, struck by her beauty and grace, made her pet, their plaything—bewildered her. She was like some careless, happy butterfly sporting over a field of poisonous flowers—pleased with their brilliant colours, unharmed by the venom they exhaled—her heart and mind being guarded by the holy shield of innocence and childhood.

"What an angel!" exclaimed Mademoiselle Adel, the principal *coryphée*; "in less than ten years she will give many a pretty fellow the heart-ache."

"And her own?" observed one of her companions, with a sigh.

"Like the rest of us, *ma belle*," replied the dancer, shrugging her shoulders. "It is so long since I lost my heart that I scarcely recollect having possessed such a thing."

"I pity him that found it!" retorted the other, with a sneer.

There had long been a rivalry between the speakers—they hated each other most cordially, as actresses only know how to hate.

The two great stars of the season were at last announced. The first was Mademoiselle Cherini—a mezzo-soprano—who had long been one of the idols of La Scala and the San Carlos.

She was exceedingly beautiful; but her beauty was of that overpowering kind, which commands admiration rather than attracts.

Like most of the daughters of sunny Italy, she was capricious, gifted, passionate and revengeful.

Her appearance created a *favor* amongst the *dilettante* lordlings, whose homage she received with the air of a Juno rather than the reserve of a vestal. London presented a new field of triumph to her ambition, but like most triumphs it was clouded.

She dreaded the arrival of a young singer—Madame Garrachi—whose fame had already occasioned her many a sleepless night. She had never seen her, but she detested her by anticipation.

(To be continued.)

WHO WERE THE FENIANS?

Irish tradition says that the Fenians were an ancient militia or standing army, employed only on home service for protecting the coasts from invasion. Each of the four provinces, says the tradition, had its band; that of Leinster, to which Fionn and his family belonged, being called the Clanna Baoisgne. This militia is said to have been paid by the king, billeted on the people in the winter, but to have lived in summer by the chase; and these are imagined to have been the qualifications of a Fenian:

"Every soldier was required to swear: that, without regard to her fortune, he would choose a wife for her virtue, her courtesy, and her good manners; that he would never offer violence to a woman; that as far as he could he would relieve the poor; and that he would not refuse to fight nine men of any other nation. No person could be received into the service unless his father and mother, and all his relatives, gave security that none of them should revenge his death upon the person who might slay him; but that they would leave the matter to his fellow-soldiers. The youth himself must be well acquainted with the twelve books of poetry, and be able to compose verses. He must be a perfect master of defence: to prove this he was placed in a field of sedge reaching up to his knees, having in his hands a target and a hazel stick as long as a man's arm. Nine experienced soldiers, from a distance of nine ridges of land, were to hurl their spears at him at once; if he was unhurt he was admitted, but if wounded he was sent off with a reproach. He must also run well and defend himself when in fight: to try his activity he was made to run through a wood, having a start of a tree's breath, the whole of the Fenians pursuing him: if he was overtaken or wounded in the wood he was refused, as too sluggish

and unskilful to fight with honour among such valiant troops. Also, he must have a strong arm, and be able to hold his weapon steadily. Also, when he ran through a wood in chase, his hair should not come untied: if it did he was rejected. He must be so swift and light of foot as not to break a rotten stick by standing upon it; able also to leap over a tree as high as his forehead, and to stoop under a tree that was lower than his knees. Without stopping or lessening his speed, he must be able to draw a thorn out of his foot. Finally, he must take an oath of fidelity. The Rev. Geoffrey Keating, who wrote a history of Erin in the year 1630, gravely says, 'So long as these terms of admission were exactly insisted upon, the militia of Ireland were an invincible defence to their country, and a terror to rebels at home and enemies abroad.'

Goll McMorna had slain Fionn's father Cumhail in battle, and was Fionn's mortal enemy in early life. Afterwards he made a peace with him, and fought under him as chieftain of the Connaught Fenians. But the supremacy of the Clanna Baoisgne led to feuds, and at last Fionn and his clan, defying the throne itself, were attacked by all the forces of Erin except those of the King of Munster, who took part with him, and suffered carnage in that battle of Gabhra wherein Oisin's son Oscar and the King Cairbre fell by each other's hands. Fionn, who was absent, arrived only in time to close his grandson's eyes, and after this defeat peace had no sweets for him and war no triumphs. Fionn died at last, it is said, by the lance of an assassin.

It is noticeable, however, that the Fenians were not confined to Erin. In the ancient poem on the battle of Gabhra we read of "the bands of the Pians of Alban"—Alban being the old name of Scotland north of the Firth of Forth and Clyde—"and the supreme King of Breatan"—Breatan being southern Scotland, of which Dunbaron, now Dunbar, was the chief seat—"belonging to the Order of the Feiane of Alban"; and also that "the Pians of Lochlan were powerful." Now Lochlan was an ancient name for Germany north of the Rhine; but when the Norwegian and Danish pirates appeared in the ninth century they were called Lothians, and the name of Lothians was transferred to Norway and Denmark. It has been argued from this that the Fenians were not a militia of Gaels, but that they were a distinct Celtic race, connected with the only two races which are spoken of as having come in earliest time from Lothian, namely, the Tuath de Danann and the Cruthine. These are thought to have been some of the Celts who preceded the Germanic peoples now occupying the north German shore and Scandinavia.—*Merley's Writers before Chaucer.*

THE DEATH OF MRS. ARBUTHNOT FROM LIGHTNING.

THE "holiday" correspondent of the *Times*, writing from Interlaken, describes a visit to the spot where, in June last, Mrs. Arbuthnot, who was in the seventh week of her honeymoon, lost her life. He writes:—

"Mr. and Mrs. Arbuthnot were bound to the Schilthorn, a hill to the west of Murren, one of those outer watch-towers from which not only, as from the Faulhorn, one looks almost into all that mountain world of the Bernese Oberland, but one can see many of the Alps of the Valais, and all the north of Switzerland besides, stretched at one's feet. The Schilthorn is 9,127 feet high, and its top can only be reached by four and a half hours' march."

"For about two and a half hours the ascent is practicable for horses; but the Arbuthnots had, as I stated before, sent theirs back, and they took their way on foot. It had been asserted that the landlord of the Silberhorn, Herr Sterchi, had endeavoured to dissuade the young couple from their enterprise by pointing to the signs of threatening weather, but Herr Sterchi assured me not only that he gave no such warning, but that there was nothing in the look of the sky to deter any person from an ascent which, although long and somewhat fatiguing, is perfectly free from danger. They set out on foot, and walked up to the distance of about three hours from Murren, when Ulrich, the guide, fancied he 'smelt electric fluid in the air,' and as a storm was visibly gathering, advised a retreat.

"Mr. Arbuthnot, probably considering that the storm was as likely to overtake them in their three hours' way back as in their forward march, and feeling that reluctance to acknowledge himself beaten that is so peculiar to the English character, wished to push on. The lady, however, pleaded exhaustion, and was left seated on the ground waiting for their return. The mountain climbers had not gone ten minutes from the spot when they saw the lightning and heard the crash of the thunder, and, unwilling to leave the lady to her too natural alarm, they retraced their steps instantly."

"What they found on the spot where ten minutes before they had left a human being full of life and

happiness has been described to me by the medical man who was summoned from Interlaken to inspect the body of the deceased at some ceremony, I presume, corresponding to the coroner's inquest in England. He said:—'Mrs. Arbuthnot's head and face were perfectly untouched; the hair stood slightly on end, as if with sudden horror, and the left temple was perfectly singed; down on the neck, where a brooch rested, the fluid, attracted by the metal, had burnt a deeper mark, but it was only in the lower part of the body, as the lady sat on the ground, that the weight of the bolt had fallen, consuming at once nearly all the vital parts, and burying itself in the ground, where it dug a deep hole about eighteen inches in diameter. No death could be more instantaneous, or attended with less conscious suffering.'

"The rest of the tale is soon told. The body of the unfortunate bride was removed first to Murren, then to Interlaken, finally to Berne, where it now lies interred.

"On the 13th of September, the Rev. W. Dillon came up from Berne, with fifteen men, bearers of a marble cross, which was to supersede the rude cross of white fir-wood, with which the pious mountaineers of Murren had marked the scene of the sad tragedy. The new marble cross, intended as a lasting monument, was erected at the distance of about eight feet from the spot on which Mrs. Arbuthnot was found dead; on the spot itself a large stone is laid, with a heap of smaller ones upon it, somewhat after the fashion of a cairn. The cross itself is about three hours' walk from Murren, but it is to be seen as you ascend, about half an hour before you come up with it.

"The record of the funeral transaction performed on the 13th was put down by Mr. Dillon on the travellers' book at the Silberhorn; under his signature are the signatures of the two chief workmen employed on the occasion—"C. Weigram de Berne," and "Henry Hirschgartner, maitre marbrier et sculpt. de Berne, à ses places th monument" (sic)."

SCIENCE.

AT the recent meeting of the British Association, Mr. Archer suggested that experiments should be made upon vegetable silk fibre, which was almost valueless for commercial purposes, but would be thought to be applicable to the purposes of manufacturing a material in lieu of gun-cotton.

A CALIFORNIA philosopher has discovered that the shocks we call earthquakes are not earthquakes. They are caused by electricity, and only extend a few feet below the surface of the earth. In the course of time, he contends, they will have summer showers in that State, which will do away with the necessity of occasional "earthquakes." It is as necessary for electricity to have some mode of expression as for a politician to have an "organ."

THE TORPEDO.—Mr. Donald McKay, the well-known American shipbuilder, is at present in this country, and is in close communication with the Admiralty on the subject of torpedoes. It is the intention, we understand, of the authorities to entertain seriously the question of having on hand a stock of these destructive missiles, with the view of laying them down in the event of a war, in the different channels leading into our harbours, thus leaving our fleet to a great extent free to proceed to sea.

DISCOVERY OF COAL IN THE NORTH RIDING.—About a year ago it was announced that in boring near the base of the Hambleton Hills a seam of coal had been met with of fair quality. Since then, the formation of the Gothland Deviation Railway showed the existence of a thin seam of coal in that district. These indications have led to further examinations, and it is asserted that indications of coal underlying Cleveland have been met with, especially near Staithes. It is singular, also, that among the family papers of Lord Downe, an old lease of part of the estate at Sessay to a coal company has been found. The working does not appear to have ever commenced; but it is now stated that the coal near Sessay is again leased to a Newcastle firm, and that a commencement will ere long be made.

A VISIT to James Watt's workshop is thus graphically described by an Edinburgh gentleman attending the British Association:—We were admitted into his workshop—a garret at the top of the house. It appears he had a scolding wife, who didn't like the messes and noises he made, so he was sent to the attic. This room is exactly as Watt left it. The very ashes are still in the grate; his little lathe has a bit of unfinished work in it; tools lie about; books and drawings are in old drawers, and strewed here and there. It is a miserable little place. Only four of us could get in at one time. In fact, the daughter of the house who went with us had to tuck herself up into all manner of shapes to prevent her crinoline

sweeping all the letters into the corners. The house is a very good one, and Watt was rich when he died there; but it's clear his wife kept him and his little workshop in the background. This room has only been recently opened. By the will of Watt's son it was ordered to be left for ever as the old man left it when he last went out at its door. It was not looked into for more than thirty years.

RAINFALL OF THE BRITISH ISLES.

MR. G. J. SYMONS handed in his report on this subject, but its reading was curtailed at the request of the President, to save time. Mr. Symons stated that his previous report had almost exclusively dealt with the rainfall of the last few years. His great aim, however, was the collection and discussion of all rainfall records. He now proposed to supply the omission, and to consider what had been done before and since 1860, what remained to be done, and to give some particulars respecting the rainfall of the last fifty years, and that of 1864.

Under the first head Mr. Symons briefly sketched the rise and progress of rainfall observation in this country, noting the more remarkable registers. Mr. Symons also presented a voluminous index to the observations already collected. This comprised 1,845 stations, and the current ten years promised to yield nearly 10,000 complete returns.

As to what had been done since 1860, the collection of the observations and the formation of the index referred to stood in the forefront, and Mr. Symons had been travelling about to see that accurate gauges were employed and kept in suitable positions. Reference was also made to the elaborate experiments with rain gauges now in progress at Caine and near Manchester, to the recent establishment of gauges round Snowdon and the Cumberland Hills, and to different new instruments and forms of gauge now under trial.

As to what remains to be done, Mr. Symons said the leading features were the collection of old registers and their discussion; the regular examination of the current returns of each year; further experiments on the size, form, &c., of rain-gauges; and a variety of other matters.

The fourth part of the report briefly discussed the rainfall during the last fifty years, and was illustrated by a diagram and a map. The results of the preliminary investigation showed a marked decrease in the last ten years, and was based on the results of ten widely separated stations. In a subsequent comparison of the last ten years with the previous ten, some singular results were deduced, and were detailed in the report.

Mr. Symons exhibited a very simple form of rain-gauge, composed of a japanned hollow cylinder, with a funnel and a glass measuring-tube, and the cost of which is only 10s. 6d. He also referred to the loss entailed upon himself from the time necessarily occupied in his operations, and intimated that without some assistance he would not be able to continue his labours.

CHEMICAL EDUCATION IN FRANCE.—Chemistry is one of the sciences to which France has always paid great attention, and in none has she achieved higher renown or produced more brilliant illustrations. The names of Lavoisier, Gay-Lussac, Thénard, and others, have a world-wide reputation. At the present moment much is being done for the general extension of chemical knowledge as a portion of special education. The establishment of a chair of organic chemistry at the College of France has been lately recorded, whose doors are open to the public without any form whatever. So long as a seat remains unoccupied, all the world is free to enter the lecture-rooms of the establishment. Recently also a gratuitous school of practical chemistry has been created, by the joint endeavours of the famous chemist, M. Chevreul, and his colleague M. Frémy, at the Jardin des Plantes. This is the first instance in which a laboratory has been opened for gratuitous instruction in the practical part of the science. The Government has subscribed 10,000 francs towards the expenses of the school, which was at first supported entirely by voluntary efforts, and M. Ménié, a manufacturing chemist, has presented a like sum, the interest of which is to be applied exclusively to the current expenses of the laboratory. The new school numbers fifty or more regular pupils, and the professor, M. Frémy, now proposes to establish another laboratory to that now in existence, in order that the higher phases of the science may be pursued side by side with the educational branch; or, in other words, that young chemists may have the means of using the knowledge which they have gained in pursuing analysis and discovery. It is to this department that the donation of M. Ménié will be applied, in order that a certain number of young men who exhibit special aptitude may be relieved from the necessity of seeking employment yielding direct pecuniary benefit, and be able to give their undivided attention to purely scientific matters. There is little doubt but

the liberality of M. Méller will induce imitators, and if the means thus supplied should produce, or rather encourage, one or two eminent chemists only per annum, the object in view will be attained. Such scholarships will be sufficient to sustain young men of talent in their early researches, while they will in no way tend to undermine individual activity. They will supply stepping-stones, but not resting-places.

OXALATE OF PEROXIDE OF THALLIUM AND AMMONIA.

OXALATE of ammonia added to a solution of thallous sulphate in dilute sulphuric acid gives a heavy, white precipitate, quite insoluble in cold water. When boiled in water, however, it dissolves, carbonic acid is evolved, and a salt of thallous oxide is formed. Dried in the air, and heated to 100 deg., it becomes oxalate of thallium and oxalate of ammonia, and no longer contains a trace of peroxide. On heating the double salt in a test-tube the metal is reduced, and is easily run into a single button.

Peroxide of thallium freely dissolves in nitric acid sp. gr. 1·4 when gently heated, and forms a clear thickish liquid, which may be diluted with a considerable amount of water without becoming turbid. The concentrated solution yields well-formed crystals, which must be separated from the mother liquor by pressure, since water decomposes them.

Tartaric acid alone gives no precipitate with an acid solution of sulphate or nitrate of peroxide of thallium, but on the addition of ammonia a cheesy precipitate is formed, which, on the further addition of ammonia and before the solution becomes alkaline, redissolves. On boiling this solution the brown peroxide is deposited.

A solution of tartaric acid, boiled with the peroxide of thallium, dissolves it with effervescence, carbonic and formic acid being produced. The solution, on cooling, deposits crystals of thallous tartate.

A solution of thallous sulphate gives, with a yellow precipitate with chromate of potash, which decomposes when washed with water, thallous oxide being separated.

A solution of thallous nitrate gives with ferricyanide of potassium a greenish precipitate, with ferricyanide a yellow. These precipitates are insoluble in dilute nitric acid.

Phosphate of soda gives with thallous sulphate a white slimy precipitate, which becomes yellowish on boiling. On the addition of ammonia, it dissolves, producing a yellow liquid, from which thallous oxide is separated by boiling.

The ammoniacal solutions with phosphoric or tartaric acid just mentioned, on the addition of sulphide of ammonium, or on passing sulphuretted hydrogen, give a brown precipitate, which, on boiling, collects together, forming a metallic-looking ball. After cooling, this is hard, but it is easily fused by heat, and gives off sulphur. When boiled with dilute sulphuric acid, the precipitate dissolves, sulphuretted hydrogen being evolved, and sulphur separated.

Iodide of potassium added to the ammoniacal tartrate solution gives a black precipitate, which is no doubt a peroxide, since no iodine is liberated, and no iodide of nitrogen is found in the precipitate. When an excess of iodide of potassium is employed, a good deal of thallium remains in solution, and the filtrate is coloured yellowish-red; this gives no precipitate with hydrochloric acid, and does not colour bisulphide of carbon or chloroform. The black precipitate boiled in the solution in which it is produced quickly changes to yellow, and among the yellow iodide of thallium bright yellow flakes of iodoform may be seen.

AERIAL NAVIGATION.

MR. F. W. BREAKEY read some "Remarks upon Aerial Navigation, suggested by Mr. Glaisher's late Ascent." The interest taken by the Association of late years in the condition and phenomena of the atmosphere, said the report, had led to the interesting experiments of Mr. Glaisher. Mr. Breakey believed that in order to carry out such experiments on that scale which was absolutely requisite to make the balloon a means of aerial locomotion, it was necessary to form a society which, preserving a connection with the British Association, should appeal to the wealthy for subventions. We had been too much accustomed to regard the balloon simply as a toy, and though our aeronauts were distinguished for courage, they were not eminent for mechanical or scientific attainments, whilst at the same time they had been deluged with mere suggestions.

Among the desiderata in aeronautics were—the power of ascension and descent without loss of gas or ballast; economy of the gas used for inflation; the best motive power for screws, screw-sails, or paddles; the prevention of gyration; and the encouragement of mechanical invention in this direction.

Mr. Breakey's own suggestion was that a small balloon should be constructed to give just so much buoyancy to a man, that with a small exertion on his part it would ascend, and on his becoming quiescent

would descend. In this he is to stand or sit in a light framework hooked to the balloon, coming close up to his armpits, with a pair of broad paddles of bamboo and silk attached working freely in a joint. It is calculated that by a downward movement of the paddles the man would rise into the air, and by continuing the movement and "feathering" the paddles would continue to rise above all obstructions. By ceasing the movement he would descend, under ordinary circumstances; under extraordinary circumstances, he would have to reverse the movement. A mechanical substitute for the man, and a larger balloon, would supply much towards what is required in aeronautics, viz., power of ascension and descent, economy in inflation, and power to preserve inflation for days or weeks.

In the discussion which ensued on the reading of this paper, the opinion seemed to prevail that the form of an aeronautic machine should resemble that of a fish rather than that of a bird, as had been formerly supposed.

THE ACTION OF METALLIC SALTS UPON THE GROWTH OF PLANTS.

SEVERAL years ago, when I was assistant to Professor Horsford, the Professor of Chemistry, he was consulted by one of the parties to an important lawsuit, where chemical principles were largely involved, and where the main question turned upon the action of copper fumes and smoke on vegetation. We made many hundreds of analyses of soil, grass, bark, and moss from the neighbourhood of the copper works, and finding copper every where, we undertook experiments in watering plants with solutions of copper, arsenic, and other metals injurious to their growth. Having kept no minutes of these experiments for my private use, this summer I made the investigations in poisoning of plants, which are given beneath.

A solution of sulphate of iron, of eight grammes (123·4584 grains), for the half litre (0·88038748 pint), was taken as a standard, and solutions of acetate of lead, chloride of tin, sulphate of zinc, sulphate of manganese, sulphate of copper, and bichloride of mercury were made, of such strength that equal measures should contain equivalent (not equal) quantities of the respective metallic bases.

Seven *Triomph de Grand* strawberry plants, as nearly alike as possible, and seven small cauliflower plants were transplanted into pots of uniform size, and beginning on the 1st day of June, each plant was treated with fifteen centimetres of the above-named solutions per day, and all the plants were watered with clear water twice a week. The following are the results:

1st. Strawberry plant subjected to the action of acetate of lead, no change till June 10th, slight blackness on stems; June 17th, stems a little decayed; June 23rd, two large and one small leaf remaining; July 2nd, two half-healthy leaves left. Cauliflower plant with acetate of lead seemed wholly unaffected. July 2nd, strong and growing.

2nd. Strawberry treated with chloride of tin, no change noticeable till June 9th, stems blackened; June 17th, stems decaying; June 21st, stems more decayed; June 30th, entirely dead. Cauliflower plant treated with chloride of tin in perfect health, July 2nd.

3rd. Strawberry plant treated with sulphate of zinc, no change noticeable till June 10th, stems blackened; June 17th, outer leaves gone; June 23rd, one leaf remaining; June 25th, entirely dead. Cauliflower plant treated with sulphate of zinc, no change noticed till June 23rd, leaves shrivelled; July 2nd, entirely dead, having decayed rapidly.

4th. Strawberry plant treated with sulphate of iron, no change observed until June 10th, stems show slight decay; June 17th, outer leaves going; June 22nd, leaves black and decaying; June 30th, entirely dead. Cauliflower plant treated with sulphate of iron July 2nd, leaves slightly shrivelled, otherwise healthy.

5th. Strawberry plant treated with sulphate of manganese, no change perceptible till June 11th, slight blackness on stems; June 16th, apparently healthy; June 23rd, several leaves dead; June 30th, two healthy leaves left. Cauliflower plant with sulphate of manganese, unchanged till June 23rd, leaves shrivelled; July 2nd, leaves badly shrivelled.

6th. Strawberry plant with sulphate of copper unchanged till June 10th, stems decaying; June 23rd, three leaves remaining; June 29th, entirely dead. Cauliflower plant with sulphate of copper unchanged till June 23rd, considerable decay; June 30th, rapid decay, almost dead.

7th. Strawberry plant with chloride of mercury, no change perceptible until June 7th, stems blackened; June 11th, stems rapidly decaying; June 17th, outer leaves dead; June 19th, whole plant entirely dead. Cauliflower plant with chloride of mercury, no change observed until June 17th, somewhat affected; June 25th, badly decayed; June 28th, entirely dead.

These experiments are interesting from one point of view, as showing how much better cauliflower plants can resist poisonous agencies than strawberries,

and what is true of the cauliflower will probably hold true of all plants of its class.

The action of the corrosive sublimate was most rapid, as may have been foreseen, but how a cauliflower can grow when daily watered with a strong solution of sugar of lead is mysterious.

The action of the iron and copper salts was about the same, although it might have been supposed that copper would act more energetically than iron.

The first signs of decay were blackening of the stems, then the stems wilted, and last of all the leaves shrivelled. The base of the stem in all cases was affected first. The roots were black and dead. I trust some eminent chemist will continue these experiments on other plants and give us his results. I should suggest the use of weaker solutions, so that the experiments might occupy a longer time, and slighter changes in the health of the plants be noticed.

J. M.

VARIATIONS IN THE MOTION OF THE AIR.—MR. A. F. OSLER read a paper "On the Horary and Diurnal Variations in Direction and Motion of the Air." He had tabulated and drawn up a series of diagrams showing the force and direction of the wind every day and hour for the last ten years. The results showed various coincidences and great changes in the curves produced, and singular breaks in the curves of mean annual temperature in November and May. Mr. Osler afterwards exhibited an anemometer constructed to record the force of the wind during hurricanes abroad. Those hitherto constructed had generally given way, but this instrument would support the requisite strain.

CHEMISTRY.

By the labours of Lavoisier and his contemporaries chemistry acquired a fixed logic and an accurate nomenclature. Dalton and the great physicists of the early part of this century gave that law of definite combination by proportionate weight of the elements, which is for chemistry what the law of gravitation is for celestial mechanics. A great expansion of the meaning of the atomic theory took place when Mitscherlich announced his views of isomorphism, isomeric and dimorphous bodies. For thus it came gradually to appear that particular forces resided in crystals in virtue of their structure, lay in certain directions, and exhibited definite physical effects, if the chemical elements, without being the same, were combined in similar proportions, and aggregated into similar crystals.

Some years later ozone was discovered by Schönbein, and it concurred with a few other allotropes in reviving among philosophic chemists the inquiry as to the relative situation of the particles in a compound body, and the effects of such arrangements—an idea which had been expressed by Dalton in diagrams of atoms, and afterwards exercised the ingenuity of Exley, Macvicar, and others.

Everything connected with this view of the modification of physical properties by the arrangement of the particles, whether elementary or compound, is of the highest importance to mineralogy—a branch of study by no means so much in favour, even with chemists, as its own merits and its collateral bearings might justly deserve. Yet it is in a great measure by help of this branch of study that the opinions now current regarding metamorphism of rocks *in situ*, and the formation of mineral veins, must acquire that solid support and general consent which at present they do not possess.

Crystals, indeed, whether regarded as to their origin in nature, their fabrication by art, or their action on the rays of light, the waves of heat and sound, and the distribution of electricity, have not been neglected by the Association or its members. In one of the earliest reports, Dr. Whewell calls attention to the state of crystallographical theory, and to the artificial production of crystals; and in another report, Professor Johnson notices epigenic and pseudomorphous crystallization; and for many years, at almost every meeting, new and brilliant discoveries in the action of crystals on light were made known by Brewster, and compared with the undulatory theory by Herschel, McCullagh, Airy, Hamilton, Whewell, Powell, Challis, Lloyd, and Stokes.

Within our association-period both the nomenclature of chemistry and the conception of the atomic theory have received, not indeed a change, but such an addition to its ordinary expression as the more general language and larger meaning of algebra have conferred on common arithmetical values. The theory of compound radicals, as these views of Liebig, Dumas, and Hoffmann may be justly termed, embraces the consideration of groups of elements united in pairs by the ordinary law, these groups being for the purpose in hand treated as single elements of combination.

The nomenclature which attempts in ordinary words to express these relations grows very unmanageable even in languages more easily capable of

polysyllabic combinations than ours; but symbols of composition—the true language of chemistry—are no more embarrassed in the expression of these new ideas than are the mathematical symbols which deal with operations of much greater complexity on quantities more various and more variable.

The study of these compound radicals comes in aid of experimental research into those numerous and complex substances which appear as the result of chemical transformations in organic bodies. Thus in some instances the very substances have been recomposed by art which the vital processes are every moment producing in nature; in others the steps of the process are clearly traced; in all the changes become better understood through which so great a variety of substances and structures are yielded by one circulating fluid; and the result is almost a new branch of animal and vegetable physiology, not less important for the health of mankind than essential to the progress of scientific agriculture.

FACETIA.

THE late Earl of Harrington when walking in his garden wore a green hat so as not to frighten the birds! Considerate and green.

A DIFFERENCE.—A French paper relates that when Rothschild was asked whether he would not like to become temporal King of the Jews in Palestine, he said: "Oh, no, I would rather be Jew of the Kings than King of the Jews."

A PARIS correspondent says that the first questions an English excursionist asks on his arrival in the capital are:—"How many francs do I get for this sovereign?" "Where do they sell pale ale?" and "Where shall we see the Emperor?"

AFFECTING.

Captain: "Ivy, madam, in your hair? It's a charming idea, madam."

Lady: "Are you so fond of seeing it as a head-dress?"

Captain (putting his foot in it): "Ivy, madam—why, madam, it is fraught with a thousand poetical associations. To see it there makes me think of it as it clings to some old ruin—adorning while it embraces the hideous desay beneath!"

ALL GONE.—A gentleman going into a chop-house the other day, found the room very close and hot. He called the waiter and said, "Have you any ventilators?"—The reply was, "No, sir, they are all gone; I just served up the last."

INSURED.—Sterne, who used his wife very ill, was one day talking to Garrick in a fine sentimental manner, in praise of conjugal love and fidelity. "The husband," said Sterne, "who behaves unkindly to his wife, deserves to have his house burnt over his head."—"If you think so," said Garrick, "I hope your house is insured."

TOO MUCH AND TOO LITTLE.—Two friends meeting after an absence of some years, during which time the one had increased considerably in bulk, and the other still resembled only the "effigy of a man"—said the stout gentleman, "Why, Dick, you look as if you had not had a dinner since I saw you last!" "And you," replied the other, "look as if you had been at dinner ever since."

VERY MUSICAL.

Churchwarden: "Well, how does the organo now, Mr. Twiddles?"

Organist (who has persuaded the vestry to have the instrument looked to): Those pedal pipes are hardly right yet, sir. Didn't you hear—"

Churchwarden: "Ah! well, I thought I heard something squeak!"

AN apothecary's boy was lately sent to leave at one house a box of pills, and at another six live fowls. Confused in this way, he left the pills where the fowls should have gone, and the fowls at the pill place. The folks who received the fowls were astonished at reading the accompanying direction: "Swallow one every two hours."

THE WAY TO DO IT.—A silly young fop was complaining to a testy old uncle that nobody treated him with any respect—that the crowd squeezed and hustled him whenever he went out to walk, and requested his uncle to tell him how he could command more consideration when he wished to promenade. "Carry a pot of paint in each hand," said the testy old curmudgeon.

An innocent country girl who had been wounded at Wemyss Railway Station, went at once to the nearest doctor and asked for a pennyworth of Railway Accident Pills. Her meaning was explained; but it would be advisable for the secretaries of railways and others to lay in a good supply of this medicine, and we could name the line where they would have a

quick sale and rapid consumption. By-the-by, where they do all things better than in England—including the traveller—"La Belle France" the paternal Government has just decreed by order of law Imperial that each railway in the empire shall be provided from this month forth with one or other safe and secure fashion of communicating between passenger and guard. Truly, they do these things better in France.

VENGEANCE.

"Do you ever go to evening parties?"

"No," said my friend Tom. "I used to, but I am cured."

"How so?" said I, anxious to learn his experience.

"Why, you see," said Tom, feelingly, "I went to one some few years back, and fell in love with a beautiful girl. I courted like a trump, and I thought I had her sure, when she eloped with a tailor. But I awoke vengeance. I patronized the robber of my happiness, and ordered a full suit of clothes, regardless of expense."

"But your vengeance?" said I.

"I struck the tailor in his most vital part. I never paid that bill!"

ABSENT MINDED.—Oxias Linley, Sheridan's brother-in-law, was a master-piece of eccentricity, and subject to perpetual fits of abstraction. He was on horseback one morning, setting out for his curacy, a few miles distant from Norwich. His horse threw off one of its shoes. A lady who observed the accident, thought it might impede his journey, and seeing that he himself was jogging on as if quite unconscious of it, politely reminded him that "one of his horse's shoes had come off."—"Thank you, madam," replied Linley. "Will you, then, have the goodness to put it on for me?"

THE Rinderpest is only superior to the milk-ma-pest, and the man has raised the price of the milk, consequent, not on the loss of cows, but the absence of water during the late dry weather. Suppose the water supply of London runs much shorter? What on earth will the milkmen do then? This is serious. The dry weather has made the water companies anxious, for the upper waters of the Thames are scanty, and there is some talk of bringing water in iron pipes from the Severn, at Tewkesbury, nearly 100 miles distant. So, after all, the London milkmen may continue to supply the what's-his-name which they now manufacture.

HARD HITTING.

THE reason why bad people are so censorious is plain enough; they desire that others should appear as bad as themselves, and are, ever seeking for proofs of the fact. So it is with many deformed people—they are always seeking for deformity in others. The other day, for example, we witnessed the meeting of two hopeful juveniles, both of whom were remarkable for peculiarity of feature.

"Hi, my hearty," shouted one of them the moment they met, "wouldn't you like to trade off that 'ere squint eye o' yours?"

"Well," said the other, "maybe it would do mighty well to look kinder round the corner o' that 'ere hook nose o' yours?"

The young gentlemen separated without a sigh or a tear.

An old bachelor having been laughed at by a party of pretty girls, told them, "You are 'small potatoes.'" "We may be 'small potatoes,'" said one of them, "but we are sweet ones."

COMPLAISANCE is no longer confined to the polite circles. A captain of a vessel was lately called out of a drinking-salon by a boatman with the following address: "An't please your honour, the tide is waiting for you."

A PRINCE, laughing at one of his courtiers, whom he had employed in several of his embassies, told him he looked like an owl. "I know not," answered the courtier, "what I look like; but this I know, that I have had the honour several times to represent your majesty's person."

A CURIOUS cause is about to be pleaded before the Tribunal of Commerce of Bordeaux. A person of that city gave a promissory note payable at sight. When it was presented the debtor had an enormous pair of green spectacles on his nose; and, having informed the messenger that his sight was very bad, asked him the nature of the bill. The messenger replied that it was payable at sight. "In that case," said the debtor, "I cannot pay it until my eyes get better, for I do not see it!" The holder of the bill not being satisfied with this view of the question, has commenced his action.

CARRYING A MESSAGE.—"John," said a man to his black servant, "go to Mr. Robin's house, and tell him if there is any law in the land, I will prosecute him. Tell him not to bring his dog here, for the animal is rabid; and that, if he comes here, in my

absence, to scold, and bawl, and pick quarrels, I will send for Mr. Jarvis, and have him taken care of." John went and delivered his message—"My master says that you shan't bring your dog to his house, for he is a rabbit, and if you go there in a bow to pick squirrels, he will send you to the barber's, and take your hair off."

ON-DIT FROM BREST.—We understand that it is the opinion of many who were present at the banquet on board the Ville de Lyons, during the recent visit of our fleet to France, that the speeches delivered below did not come up to the decorations.—*Fun.*

DISSECTING THE BODY OF THE WATERS.—A medical student, who has just been to Boulogne and back, says that he is no longer surprised at the enormous strength of the waves, considering the quantity of mussels he had found in them.—*Punch.*

AN EXTRAVAGANT CLIMB.—"I wonder why it is," remarked our tailor the other day, "that people who are fond of running up hills never seem to come down with any money." We were so much struck by the philosophy of the remark that we immediately ordered a gorgeous coat.—*Fun.*

VERY CRUEL.

Street Boy: "Please S' R'member the Grotto, Sir?" Old Gentleman: "What! and Natives half-a-crown a dozen! You little unfeeling vagabond, get along with you!"—*Punch.*

INNOCENT CREATURE!—An old lady wonders that, when the thread of the Atlantic cable was broken, the Great Eastern didn't give a tack or two, and so repair it. Her wonder is all the greater as she was assured they had a very good needle on board.—*Punch.*

"WE FLY BY NIGHT" AND DAY.—Visitors at the seaside have suffered from flies more than any one else. Not only were these myriads of insects a source of perpetual stinging annoyance, but they have constituted in themselves a new kind of "devouring clement." We know in many lodging-houses it has been quite impossible to keep meat for longer than a few hours. Instances have been known of where a large joint has been had for dinner, and not a morsel of it left for supper; and this fact has been forcibly illustrated by the lodging-house-keeper producing the bones, as a proof of how extremely clean these entomological police have done their work. Not only has it been in the article of animal food that these devastations have been committed, but tea, sugar, butter, candles have all suffered to a corresponding degree. Where these flies have once gained admission into a house, the distress they levy is of a most devastating nature; for, like active sheriff's-officers, they clear everything before them in a very short space of time. The moment you have ocular proof of their visitation, which is not very difficult, as they have an unpleasant trick of getting into your eyes, the only remedy is to give notice to quit immediately. So busy have been these flies lately, that we have been informed of many respectable families having been driven up to Town expressly by them.—*Punch.*

THE COLOUR OF GOLD.—Some years ago, when making experiments on the determination of the amount of gold in native alloys, it was found that when the gold was doubly precipitated from its nearly mutual solution, by the addition of oxalic acid, it occasionally happened that an extremely thin film of metallic gold would attach itself rather thinly to the glass vessel in which the precipitation had been conducted; and when the vessel was dry, this film, with light transmitted through it, showed a fine blue colour, instead of green, which is generally attributed to metallic gold in a very fine state of division. On making experiments in conjunction with Dr. Lloyd, it was ascertained that when gold is subjected to the action of transmitted light, side lights being excluded, there was no doubt remaining but that blue was the true colour of gold as thus viewed, and not green, and that this colour proceeded from the metallic gold itself.

THE "BELILDAS" OF THE PRESENT DAY.—Most of the poets, from Homer to Tupper, have waxed eloquent upon woman's hair. Bernice's golden fibres, we are told, found such favour in the eyes of Venus, that the goddess made a constellation of the lady's top-knot. But that's all mythological moonshine. Pope has given us a fine poem on the theft of a single ringlet, and Belinda's back hair is immortalized in his couplets. "Man's Imperial race" if there is any truth in poetry, is as incapable of escaping from the little lessons of Beauty, as a woodcock from a spring of wire. The inspired volume itself tells us that "the glory of a woman is her hair," and the probability is that had Delilah been bald, Samson would never have laid his head in her lap long enough to permit that Philistine syron to perform the tonsure. If her hair is woman's crowning

charm, it must be admitted that in all ages she has made the most of it. A writer on this subject declares that the hearts she has fettered with her silken tresses would form, if they could be heaped together, a mountain range higher than the Himalayas and longer than the Andes. Fearful arithmetic! One celebrated bard tell us that woman can draw us whether she will "with a single hair." If this be true, what can she not do with an entire waterfall? Admitting the draught power attributed to a single filament to be correct, a few hundred modern ladies of fashion would be a sufficient team to drag the whole adult male population of England to— who can tell where? But though these truths be self-evident it may be plausibly urged that they do not strictly apply to woman's hair as at present worn. No doubt our Belindas could draw our hearts if they chose; but as it is they do them.

STATISTICS.

OUR GREAT TOWNS.—An estimate has been made by the Registrar-General of the population of ten large towns in the United Kingdom in the middle of the year 1865. The estimate is as follows:—London, 3,015,494; borough of Liverpool, 476,368; city of Manchester, 354,930; borough of Salford, 110,833; borough of Birmingham, 327,842; borough of Leeds, 224,025; city of Bristol, 161,809; city of Edinburgh, 174,180; city of Glasgow, 428,728; city of Dublin (and some suburbs), 317,666.

THE QUANTITY of coal dug in Great Britain in the year 1865 appears by the returns of Mr. R. Hunt to have been 92,787,878 tons. This would yield, if employed in steam-engines of good construction, an amount of available force about equal to that of the whole human race. But in the combustion of coal not less than ten times this amount of force is actually set free—nine-tenths being, at present unavailable, according to the statement of Sir William Armstrong, in his address to the meeting at Newcastle in 1863.

THE COFFEE TRADE.—The gradual decrease in the consumption of coffee, usually attributed to the increased consumption of tea, appears to be a most serious matter for the coffee-growers, whose whole prosperity depends upon this particular branch of commerce. The Planter's Association in Ceylon have forwarded a petition to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that of late years the consumption of coffee has been steadily declining, the deliveries for 1864 showing a falling off of more than 12,000 cwt., as compared with 1863; and of nearly 28,000 cwt. as compared with 1862; while the consumption of tea, on the other hand, has been rapidly on the rise, the deliveries for 1864 showing an increase of about 3,500,000 lbs over 1863, and nearly 10,000,000 lbs over 1862. This is owing in a great measure to the reduction of 6d. per lb in the duty on tea effected in 1863. The late further reduction of 6d. per lb will render the contrast even more striking. Fears are justified by the fact that, in the first five months of this year, 1865, the deliveries of coffee for home consumption were upwards of 20,000 cwt. less than in the corresponding five months of last year, whereas the present duty on tea of 6d. per lb may be taken as 17 per cent. of the value of the produce, the duty on coffee at 8d. per lb is about 95 per cent. of its value, and finally, to prevent a further aggravation of these results, and to place coffee in a position to compete on even terms in the home market with tea, the petitioners "pray that in the coming year a reduction may be proposed in the duty on coffee proportionate to that already carried with regard to tea."

GEMS.

YOU cannot fathom your mind. There is a well of thought there which has no bottom. The more you draw from it the more clear and plentiful it will be.

A SMILE.—Who can tell the value of a smile? It costs nothing to the giver, but is beyond price to the erring and relenting, the sad and sheerless, the lost and forsaken. It disarms malice—subdues temper—turns hatred to love—revenge to kindness—and paves the darkest path with gems of sunlight. A smile on the brow betrays a kind heart, a pleasant friend, an affectionate brother, a dutiful son, a happy husband. It adds a charm to beauty, it decorates the face of the deformed, and makes a lovely woman resemble an angel in Paradise.

GAMBLING.—Let every young man avoid all sorts of gambling as he would poison. A poor man or boy should not allow himself to toss up for a halfpenny, for this is often the beginning of a habit of gambling, and the ruinous crime creeps on by slow degrees. Whilst a man is minding his work, he is playing the game he is sure to win. A gambler never makes any good use of his money even if he should win.

He only gambles the more; and he is often reduced to beggary and despair. He is often tempted to commit crimes for which his life is forfeited to his country, or perhaps he puts an end himself to his miserable existence. If a gambler loses he injures himself; if he wins he injures a companion or a friend. And could any honest man enjoy money gained in such a way?

SOME NEW SENSATION.

THEY met as pleasant friends might meet,
Amid a round of dissipation,
They chatted, lounged along the street,
But never dreamed of a flirtation.
Their tastes, pursuits, were much the same,
Some lively humour, quiet wit—
Each knew too well the scorching flame
To care about its counterfeit.
They played it kindly, not too far,
Unwise it were to leave a smart;
Too thorough-bred to note the scar
That either carried in the heart.
The pleasant days full swiftly flew,
Until, at last, he rose to leave her,
She smiled a careless calm "Adieu!"
And he, as coolly, doffed his beaver.
"Toujours sans tache!" her motto bold;
O'er many close-won fields it flew!
He only thought her very cold,
Nor dreamed that she was—merely true!
Blind! blind! His hand had touched the key,
To fountains sealed so long ago,
Where, nestling 'neath Life's troubled sea,
Unsullied, slept a heart below!

He went to seek among the fair
Some new sensation, good or ill;
She breathed for him a woman's prayer,
And keeps her pure heart hidden still.

J. G.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

COTTON AS A PRESERVATIVE OF FRUIT.—It is not generally known that common raw cotton is one of the best and most simple means of preserving fruit for a long while. In America it is in very general use for keeping grapes fresh all the winter. The method employed is as follows:—The bunches are gently laid between a layer of cotton in a glass or earthenware jar. The jar is then corked down and the corks dipped in melted resin. Of course it is much easier to preserve apples and pears, which need only be laid between two layers of cotton on the pantry shelf or store-room.

COLOUR FOR CEMENT.—The following mixture will produce a paint that will neither blister nor peel off, and will stand exposure to wind and rain:—Take a spadeful of lime and slack it with one quart of warm blood, fresh from the slaughter-house. Add to this a sufficient quantity of bear glands, or stale beer and skim milk, in equal parts, boiled together, to fill with the lime and blood an ordinary pail. Use no water, but add colouring at discretion. I used this extensively some years ago in exposed situations, in North America, as also the following, but prefer the above, as I find it has also been successfully tried here. The other plan is—lime, one gallon; slackened with one gallon of skim milk. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of powdered alum and one gallon of wood ashes, mixing all to the consistence of thick cream, with soft water, and adding colouring matter as required. On some occasions borax was substituted for the alum. I can favourably recommend this for new work, and have found the tint that results from the mixture very pearl-like and pleasant.

PLANTING PEAS DEEP.—Deep planting for peas is not generally resorted to, under the impression that the seed will not ripen in the ground. This is a great mistake. Peas covered six inches deep will produce twice as much as those covered but an inch; they continue to flower longer, and the vines are vigorous, and do not lie down, as is often the case where shallow plantings are made. We have tested this matter, and therefore know from experience that, if it is desired to get a large crop, the seed must be buried deep. A suitable piece of ground, enriched the previous year, was deeply ploughed in the fall and spring, and put in fine tilt. One-half of the piece was marked out in drills, and the seed covered two inches deep. On the other half, the plough was sunk deep, and the seeds scattered at the bottom of the furrow. In this way one half the piece was gone over and levelled, leaving the seed at least eight inches from the surface. The peas that were ploughed were a little longer in coming up, but they soon shot ahead of the others. The vines were thrifty and

vigorous, and produced treble the quantity of those in two-inch drills by their side. The seed used was the Champion of England; the soil, time of planting, and culture, except the manner of putting them in, were precisely the same for both.

MISCELLANEOUS.

AN international regatta is shortly to take place on the Seine, on which occasion there will be a boat race between French and English rowers.

THE Russian army is to be reduced to the standard of 1862—namely, 650,000 men. About 82,000 men have been discharged, and next year the army is to be further reduced to 500,000 men.

THE Queen and Royal Family will spend All-hallows in Scotland, consequently Her Majesty will not return to Windsor Castle for the winter season before Tuesday, the 7th of November.

STATISTICS affirm that of one thousand infants fed by a mother's milk, only an average of three hundred die young; while of the same number brought up by wet nurses, at least half do not live one year.

AT Hillsborough petty sessions, James Fox appeared covered in the Court Room, and on his refusing to take off his hat, it was removed by a constable. As he was a Quaker, the magistrates decided not to commit him for contempt of court, and he then walked away bare-headed, declining to take back his hat.

THE demands for space at the Paris Exhibition of 1867 have been numerous, and the ground has already been allotted. France, of course, takes the largest share, with 64,000 metres. England comes next with 23,000. Prussia, Austria, and the Germanic Confederation each want about 7,500. Belgium, 7,250. Italy requires nearly 4,000; and the United States about 3,350.

IN Paris horseshoes may not be roughed, because that wears out the macadamised paving so general on the great thoroughfares of that city; but it tells fearfully on horses. Paris would reward the inventor who would contrive a shoe which, without having picking projections, would yet have bite enough to keep from slipping. Intervening strips of steel might, by the quicker wearing down of the softer iron, keep up the required edge, and not be too costly.

THERE is now in Aldershot a soldier of eighteen years' service, belonging to one of the crack regiments in camp, of good character, and has served in several engagements, who is, with his wife and six children, literally starving on the wretched pittance of 8d. per day! The poor fellow is reduced to this wretched strait in consequence of being put under stoppages to the extent of £6, for the cost of transporting his family from the last station at which he was quartered to Aldershot. The wretched family have lived (?) on 2s. 2d. for thirty-nine days—less than 8d. per day, and less than 1d. per head.

AILANTHUS SILK-WORM.

THE long continuance of warm weather has greatly favoured the experiments made in the rearing of the *Bombyx cynthia*. In the Jardin d'Acclimation, in the Bois de Boulogne, may be seen at the present moment a large number of these worms of the third generation of this season, feeding in the open air on the ailanthus, or spinning their cocoons. The creatures are of great size, and seem to be in perfectly healthy condition. The cocoons are generally formed at the extreme end of the branches, or rather of the leaves, for the ailanthus has long compound leaves, with many leaflets, like the ash, where no bird, however light, could rest and make a meal of the occupant, and the worms take the curious precaution, before commencing the cocoon, to attach several threads of their web to the leaf stalk as high as the third or fourth leaflet, so that if that on which the cocoon is fixed were to be broken from its stalk, it would still be held pendant by these stay-threads.

A NEW fossil reptile of gigantic proportions has been found in the Wealden formations of Brooke, in the Isle of Wight. The only parts of the skeleton wanting are the head and neck. The animal was about six feet long from the shoulder to the haunch, and was furnished with a massive tail five feet long. The legs were about four feet long, terminating in a broad, short foot. One of the most remarkable features of this curious *celic* is the manner in which it is clothed in bony armour. Plates of bone from half an inch to four inches in diameter, and about half an inch thick, covered all parts of the body except the back, which bore a huge osseous shield. This strange fossil was discovered by the Rev. W. Fox, of Buxton, near Brooke, and has received the name of *Polacanthus* thus from Professor Owen.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

S. W. C.—Your request will be borne in mind, and complied with should opportunity offer.

B. W. W.—If you were married under the surname by which you are generally known, the marriage is valid.

R. C. W.—A will made before your marriage will not be valid; you must make a new one, as the marriage ceremony has revoked it.

J. SMELL.—As we happen to be very strongly adverse to the practice of taking or killing "small birds," we must decline acceding to your request.

ELIA T. AND LILLIAN S.—We are sorry your second communication did not reach us sooner. The request will not be overlooked.

BIRDEK.—We do not term our matrimonial notes "advertisements," and make no charge whatever for their insertion.

A. P. T.—Wills take effect as if executed immediately before the death of the testator; unless a contrary intention is expressed or appears in the will.

CHAR. P.—There is no alternative—you must now wait with what patience you may happen to possess, until the lady replies again.

M. Y. N.—You will perceive that we give insertion to one of your poetical effusions. The other is declined with thanks.

C. L.—If the blow was aimed at the horse whilst you were in the saddle, and in consequence of it you were thrown, it is legally an assault upon the rider.

S. E. M., who is twenty-eight years of age, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, dark complexion, and has an income of £100 a year, being tired of single life, would very much like to correspond with a domesticated young lady, with a view to matrimony.

ROST. A. G.—Louisville is in the United States, not in Canada; and the most likely way in which to obtain the address of your uncles is to advertise for them in a Louisville newspaper.

E. A. A.—No, it is not by any means positive that the coldest place on the earth is at the North Pole. In fact, it would seem that the intensity of cold decreases as the North Pole is more closely approached.

A. B. C.—The Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes can compel a husband and wife to live under the same roof; but it must be shown by the party suing that there is no legal reason to the contrary—such as cruelty, infidelity, &c.

C. H. C., who is twenty-eight years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, fair, and good-looking, and has about £100 per annum, wishes to correspond matrimonially with a lady who has an income of not less than £20 per annum, but makes no stipulation as to age, looks, &c.

C. B. J., who is nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, good-looking, good tempered, and having good expectations, would be most happy to correspond matrimonially with a young and affectionate lady, about the same age, and who is respectably connected.

C. O. K. W. is anxiously seeking for a wife, who must be under twenty years of age, good looking, amiable, in disposition, and also *discreet* in manner, as she will have to assume a good social position in a country town. With a lady thus qualified he would be happy to exchange *cartes*.

MARY W.—To remove mildew stains from linen, take soap, and rub it well; then scrape some fine chalk, and rub it also on the linen; afterwards lay it on grass, and as it dries wet it a little. The stains will disappear on twice repeating the process. We will supply you with the other receipt in a subsequent number.

ELIA AND ALICIA would be happy to correspond matrimonially with two young gentlemen. "Elia" is just twenty years of age, is considered a handsome brat, and has an income of £150 per annum. "Alicia" is eighteen years of age, fair, considered very good-looking, and has an income of £200 a year.

C. H. J.—You are under a slight misapprehension; the reply alluded to did not refer to the MS. which forms the subject of your note. We receive so many similar inquiries that we can only reply in general terms to all, and by referring to our notice respecting literary contributions at the end of this page.

OMA, who is twenty-one years of age, of medium height, with light complexion and dark hair and eyes, is a most respectable tradesman's son, and religiously inclined, is desirous of forming the acquaintance of a highly respectable, religious, vivacious, domesticated, and good tempered lady, about eighteen years of age, with a matrimonial view.

H. M. being on matrimonial thoughts intent, sends the following note:—"I very much regret that I have but very lately become acquainted with your valuable journal, which seems to fill up a gap so terrifying to many poor mortals as the gulf into which Curtina leapt was to the Romans. Often and often have I lamented the want of some one "to fill up the void in my heart," but with only £100 a year (certain for life) I have felt most diffident of asking any educated woman to share what in the present days of voluminous skirts and expensive dress, she might deem poverty. This consideration sees me, with most of the essentials towards rendering a highly educated and intellectual lady happy, still a miserable bachelor at thirty-three; and I should probably have remained so, grinning and bearing my burden for the rest of my life, had not the sight of your periodical (espe-

cially No. 117) shows me that there are beings of the other sex similarly situated. Of good family and well (I might even say highly) educated, I have travelled largely, and am a good linguist, was employed in America seven years as professor of languages, until the war drove me, like many others of peaceable pursuits, back to Europe; but I purpose re-establishing myself in the New World, and should like to meet a lady such as "Alice Mand," "Constance H.," "Alice" or "Minnie" in No. 117, whose means added to my own would enable us to commence married life with a moderate degree of comfort, and to spend a year or eighteen months on the continent, for the purpose of improving in Italian and Spanish, before crossing the Atlantic. (I should have mentioned that my hair, beard, whiskers and mustache are brown eyes the same, height 5 ft. 6 in., habits very active, and fond of poetry, music, and singing. *Carte* available when required.)

C. B., who is twenty-four years of age, has dark hair and eyes, is considered very good-looking, respectably connected, and is a good profession, wishes to meet with an educated young lady, possessing some means, who will be willing to open a correspondence with him, as a preliminary to marriage.

N. M.—If your husband has been absent for two years and upwards without reasonable excuse, that, coupled with unfaithfulness, would be quite sufficient ground for annulling a divorce. You can obtain a protection order for your goods from any police magistrate; but you must enter the County Court registry of the district within ten days after obtaining it.

G. G. M.—Irregular marriages—that is, marriages contracted by mere declaration, acknowledgment, &c.—may yet be contracted in Scotland; but it is essential that one of the parties shall have had a usual place of residence there, or lived in Scotland for twenty-one days previous to such marriage. Gretna Green marriages have long been virtually at an end.

LINES OF HOPE.

I wandered mid the sylvan grove

At eve when everything looked fair

To ponder o'er my absent love,

And try to seek sweet solace there.

And o'er the murmuring of the wind

That gently swayed the tender tree

Waved sweet thoughts across my mind,

That over seemed to comfort me.

The little brook that coursed along,

And chased its ripples one by one,

Still muttered sounds as though in song,

That seemed to lift and bear me on.

And every moment as I strayed

New hopes were springing in my breast;

I seized the contract quickly made,

And set my troubled heart at rest.

M. Y. N.

E. C. S.—The distinction between larceny and embezzlement—is this: If a clerk or shopman, on receiving money from a customer, put it into his pocket instead of the till, and appropriate it, he is guilty of embezzlement; if he put it into the till, and take it out again and place it in his own pocket, it is larceny.

FANNY AND AGNES wish to correspond with two young gentlemen, from eighteen to twenty years of age, with a view to matrimonial engagements. "Fanny" is seventeen years of age, of medium height, with dark hair and eyes, fair complexion, and very good-looking. "Agnes" is also seventeen years of age, and of medium height, a brunette, and considered pretty.

LAURA AND LIZZIE wish to correspond with two young gentlemen, whose complexions will not be valued so much as their good qualities. "Laura" is tall, amiable, and considered good-looking, well educated, and of domesticated habits. "Lizzie" is fair, of middle height, highly accomplished, and will make a thoroughly domesticated and loving wife.

SUE M., who is twenty-four years of age, rather tall, with brown hair and grey eyes, and respectably connected, seeks a matrimonial introduction to a gentleman from twenty-seven to thirty years of age, who is rather tall and fair, able to keep a wife comfortably; and not a flop but manly in his manner. With such a one "Sue M." will be happy to exchange *cartes* as a matrimonial preliminary.

T. D., a gentleman of good social position, in his fiftieth year, and in receipt of an income of £200 per annum, wishes to obtain a matrimonial introduction to a young lady from seventeen to twenty years of age, of prepossessing appearance and distinguished manners (money no object). T. D. is tall, and commanding appearance, speaks several languages, and has also a great taste for music. *Carte* de visite will be forwarded to any young lady responding.

J. L., who is twenty-five years of age, tall, dark and handsome, has always moved in good society, and holds a commission in the army (independent of which he is heir to an entitled estate yielding about £3,000 per annum), wishes to obtain a matrimonial introduction to a good, beautiful, and accomplished young lady—in short, one who would make a good wife. *Carte* to be exchanged as a preliminary.

MARY, MIZZIE AND MAGGY wish to correspond matrimonially with three respectable young tradesmen, each possessing an income sufficient to support a wife in a respectable sphere. "Mary" is twenty-four years of age, 5 ft. in height, has dark blue eyes and brown hair, and is very domesticated, and qualified to make home happy. "Lizzie" is twenty-two years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, has golden hair and light blue eyes, considered very fine-looking, and very good tempered. "Maggie" is twenty-one years of age, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, has dark brown hair, laughing blue eyes, is well educated, and of an affectionate disposition. *Carte* to be exchanged as a preliminary.

CAROLINE SHARHOLDER.—We agree with you in believing that the Atlantic Telegraph Cable will become a *fait accompli* eventually. We believe the first experiments in the transmission of an electric discharge along an electric wire were made in 1747 (July 14th), by Dr. Watson, when he passed an electric current from the Thames bank at Westminster to the opposite bank at Lambeth, by means of a wire suspended to Westminster Bridge. He continued his researches, and the following year at Shooter's Hill, sent an electric discharge through a length of 12,375 feet of wire.

The applying of this discovery to the transmission of electric telegraph signals was a natural result of Dr. Watson's experiments.

HILLEN, who is nineteen years of age, of medium height, with dark hair and eyes, fair complexion, good tempered, and of a loving disposition; and ALICE, who is also nineteen years of age, of medium height, a brunette, considered handsome, and is good tempered and of affectionate disposition, would like to correspond matrimonially with two young gentlemen, from twenty to twenty-two years of age. *Carte* to be exchanged. (The handwriting is moderately good.)

GOREND.—Aphorisms are "the concentrated wisdom of ages," and our "Gems" come under that category. You have assuredly taken a very narrow view of the sentiment expressed in this maxim "Say nothing of yourself," which merely inculcates the wisdom of being discreetly silent as regards one's personal merits, but does not declare that if asked a question as to being skilled in music, or as to the possession of any other accomplishment or merit, that nothing is to be said in reply; it is simply intended to point out the vanity of vain-glorious boasting. The maxim is as old as philosophy itself.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

LILLIAN S. will be most happy to receive the *carte* of Harry Eisenham.

S. A. S. would be glad to exchange *cartes* with "St. Clair" (No. 122). Is twenty-three years of age, very amiable, and possesses thorough business habits, but no fortune.

E. G. feels much flattered by the response of "Aigner," he thinks that she will suit him admirably, and is willing to exchange *cartes* at the earliest opportunity.

LEONARD, who is tall and handsome, has a comfortable income, and is anxious to enter on married life, would like (with that end) to correspond with "Aged Maiden."

CHARLES C. and WILLIAM W. D. would like to hear further from "Fanny B." and "E. J. M." with whom they will be most happy to communicate with a view to matrimony.

L. P. N. would feel great pleasure in hearing matrimony from the young lady adopting the signature of "No Name." Is eighteen years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, and of dark complexion.

R. S. would like to correspond matrimonially with "The Maid of Kent" or her friend, "Julia Harcourt," and will cheerfully supply all requisite particulars, should other lady favour him with a response.

L. LILLIE would like to correspond matrimonially with or be introduced to "E. V. H." Is blonde, rather pale, well educated, and could make herself domesticated, but has no fortune.

M. Y. will be very happy to hear further from a "Bachelor Tradesman," with a view to a matrimonial engagement, and will be pleased to receive his *carte* in exchange for her own. Has been accustomed to business.

A. B. would be happy to correspond and exchange *cartes* with *Carte* with a view to matrimony, with "M. H." (No. 124). Is dark hair and dark eyes, is considered good-looking, and belongs to a good profession.

H. E. would be happy to correspond and exchange *cartes* with a view to matrimony with "Aged Maiden." Is twenty-one years of age, with light complexion, rather tall, and considered good looking.

S. VALENTINE would be very happy to correspond and exchange *cartes* with "No Name," with a view to matrimony. Is nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 4 in. in height, with brown hair, and light blue eyes.

CHARLES W. would like to correspond with a "Madeline" (who entirely realises his ideal of a wife), with a view to matrimony. Is twenty-two years of age, of very respectable family, and holds a good mercantile position.

C. B. would be happy to correspond with "H. B. M." with a view to matrimony. Is nineteen years of age, of medium height, with dark complexion, and brown hair; is considered very pretty, and thoroughly domesticated, would be happy to correspond and exchange *cartes* with "F. K." with a view to matrimony. (The handwriting is very fair.)

M. T. H. would be happy to hear from, and exchange *cartes* with "Beatrice Gordon," with a view to matrimony. Is twenty-six years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, with brown hair, and light blue eyes; is considered very good looking, and has good expectations.

JOKER LINDEK, who holds a good appointment in a bank, and is in receipt of a fair & rapidly increasing salary, with a good yearly allowance, is desirous of making the acquaintance of either "Alice" or "Hattie" (but preferably "Alice"), with a view to matrimony, either immediate or after a reasonable term of courtship. Is nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, fair, with auburn hair, and considered handsome. *Carte* to be exchanged as a preliminary.

FRED. S. solicits an exchange of *cartes* from either "Alice" or "Hattie," with a matrimonial view. Is twenty-four years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, with dark brown hair, fair, fresh complexion, blue eyes, and considered very good looking; is in receipt of a good income from a business in Liverpool, and has a small property in Ireland, where he possesses a beautifully situated residence.

GROKZ LINDEK, who holds a good appointment in a bank, and is in receipt of a fair & rapidly increasing salary, with a good yearly allowance, is desirous of making the acquaintance of either "Alice" or "Hattie" (but preferably "Alice"), with a view to matrimony, either immediate or after a reasonable term of courtship. Is nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, fair, with auburn hair, and considered handsome. *Carte* to be exchanged as a preliminary.

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